Executive Order 13484—Amending the Order of Succession Within the Department of Agriculture

January 9, 2009

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. 3345 *et seq.*, it is hereby ordered that Executive Order 13241 of December 18, 2001, as amended, is further amended as follows:

Section 1. Section 2 is amended to read as follows:

"***Sec. 2.*** *Order of Succession.*

"(a) General Counsel of the Department of Agriculture;

"(b) Chief Financial Officer of the Department of Agriculture;

"(c) Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Administration;

"(d) Under Secretary of Agriculture for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services;

"(e) Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment;

"(f) Under Secretary of Agriculture for Marketing and Regulatory Programs;

"(g) Under Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Development;

"(h) Under Secretary of Agriculture for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services;

"(i) Under Secretary of Agriculture for Food Safety;

"(j) Under Secretary of Agriculture for Research, Education, and Economics;

"(k) Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Congressional Relations;

"(l) Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Civil Rights;

"(m) Director, Kansas City Commodity Office, Farm Service Agency (consistent with the time of service and rate of pay requirements of section 3345(a)(3) of title 5, United States Code); and

"(n) State Executive Directors of the Farm Service Agency for the States of Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, and Nebraska, in order of seniority fixed by length of unbroken service as State Executive Director of that State (consistent with the time of service and rate of pay requirements of section 3345(a)(3) of title 5, United States Code).".

Sec. 2. Section 3(a) is amended by striking "2(a)–(j)" and inserting "2(a)–(n)", and a new section 3(c) is added to read as follows:

"(c) No individual listed in section 2 shall act as the Secretary unless that individual is otherwise eligible to so serve under the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998."

Sec. 3. This order is intended to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, by any party against the United States, its agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 9, 2009.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., January 13, 2009]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on January 14. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Executive Order 13485—Providing an Order of Succession Within the Department of Transportation

January 9, 2009

By the authority vested in me as President under the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. 3345 *et seq.*, it is hereby ordered that:

Section 1. *Order of Succession.* Subject to the provisions of section 2 of this order,

the following officials of the Department of Transportation, in the order listed, shall act as and perform the functions and duties of the office of the Secretary of Transportation (Secretary), during any period in which the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary of Transportation, the Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy, and the officials designated by the Secretary pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 102(e) have died, resigned, or otherwise become unable to perform the functions and duties of the office of Secretary, until such time as the Secretary or one of the officials listed above is able to perform the duties of that office:

(a) Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration;
(b) Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration;
(c) Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration;
(d) Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration;
(e) Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration;
(f) Administrator of the Maritime Administration;
(g) Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration;
(h) Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration;
(i) Administrator of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration;
(j) Administrator of the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation;
(k) Regional Administrator, Southern Region, Federal Aviation Administration;
(l) Director, Resource Center, Lakewood, Colorado, Federal Highway Administration; and
(m) Regional Administrator, Northwest Mountain Region, Federal Aviation Administration.

Sec. 2. *Exceptions.* (a) No individual who is serving in an office listed in section 1 in an acting capacity, by virtue of so serving, shall act as Secretary pursuant to this section.

(b) No individual who is serving in an office listed in section 1 shall act as Secretary unless that individual is otherwise eligible to so serve under the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998.

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of this order, the President retains discretion, to the extent permitted by law, to depart from this order in designating an acting Secretary.

Sec. 3. This order supersedes the President's Memorandum of March 19, 2002 (Designation of Officers of the Department of Transportation).

Sec. 4. This order is intended to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, by any party against the United States, its agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 9, 2009.

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Executive Order 13486—Strengthening Laboratory Biosecurity in the United States

January 9, 2009

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Policy.* It is the policy of the United States that facilities that possess biological select agents and toxins have appropriate security and personnel assurance practices to protect against theft, misuse, or diversion to unlawful activity of such agents and toxins.

Sec. 2. *Establishment and Operation of the Working Group.* (a) There is hereby established, within the Department of Defense for administrative purposes only, the Working Group on Strengthening the Biosecurity of the United States (Working Group).

(b) The Working Group shall consist exclusively of the following members:

(i) the Secretary of State;
(ii) the Secretary of Defense, who shall be a Co-Chair of the Working Group;
(iii) the Attorney General;
(iv) the Secretary of Agriculture;
(v) the Secretary of Commerce;
(vi) the Secretary of Health and Human Services, who shall be a Co-Chair of the Working Group;
(vii) the Secretary of Transportation;
(viii) the Secretary of Energy;
(ix) the Secretary of Homeland Security;
(x) the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;
(xi) the Director of National Intelligence;
(xii) the Director of the National Science Foundation; and
(xiii) the head of any other department or agency when designated:
(A) by the Co-Chairs of the Working Group with the concurrence of such head; or
(B) by the President.

(c) The Co-Chairs shall convene and preside at meetings of the Working Group, determine its agenda, and direct its work. The Co-Chairs may establish and direct subgroups of the Working Group, as appropriate to deal with particular subject matters, that shall consist exclusively of members of the Working Group.

(d) A member of the Working Group may designate, to perform the Working Group or Working Group subgroup functions of the member, any person who is a part of the member's agency and who is an officer of the United States appointed by the President, a member of the Senior Executive Service (SES), or the equivalent of a member of the SES.

Sec. 3. *Functions of the Working Group.* Consistent with this order, and to assist in implementing the policy set forth in section 1 of this order, the Working Group shall:

(a) review and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness, with respect to Federal and nonfederal facilities that conduct research on, manage clinical or environmental laboratory operations involving, or handle, store, or transport biological select agents and toxins, of the following:
(i) existing laws, regulations, and guidance with respect to physical, facility, and personnel security and assurance; and
(ii) practices with respect to physical, facility, and personnel security and assurance;

(b) obtain information or advice, as appropriate for the conduct of the review and evaluation, from the following:
(i) heads of executive departments and agencies;
(ii) elements of foreign governments and international organizations with responsibility for biological matters, consistent with functions assigned by law or by the President to the Secretary of State; and
(iii) representatives of State, local, territorial, and tribal governments, and other entities or other individuals in a manner that seeks their individual advice and does not involve collective judgment or consensus advice or deliberation; and

(c) submit a report to the President, through the Co-Chairs, not later than 180 days after the date of this order that is unclassified, with a classified annex as required, and sets forth the following:
(i) a summary of existing laws, regulations, guidance, and practices with respect to security and personnel assurance reviewed under subsection (a) of this section and their efficiency and effectiveness;
(ii) recommendations for any new legislation, regulations, guidance, or practices for security and personnel assurance for all Federal and nonfederal facilities described in subsection (a);
(iii) options for establishing oversight mechanisms to ensure a baseline standard is consistently applied for all physical, facility, and personnel security and assurance laws, regulations, and guidance at all Federal and nonfederal facilities described in subsection (a); and
(iv) a comparison of the range of existing personnel security and assurance programs for access to biological select agents and toxins to personnel security and assurance programs in other fields and industries.

Sec. 4. *Duties of Heads of Departments and Agencies.* (a) The heads of departments and agencies shall provide for the labor and travel costs of their representatives and, to the extent permitted by law, provide the Working Group such information and assistance as it needs to implement this order.

(b) To the extent permitted by law and subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary of Defense shall provide the Working Group with such administrative and support services as may be necessary for the performance of its functions.

Sec. 5. *Termination of the Working Group.* Termination of the Working Group. The Working Group shall terminate 60 days after the date of the report submitted under subsection 3(c) of this order.

Sec. 6. *General Provisions.* (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) authority granted by law to a department or agency, or the head thereof; or

(ii) functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budget, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(b) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(c) This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 9, 2009.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., January 13, 2009]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on January 14. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address
January 10, 2009

Good morning. This week, I gave my official farewell speech to the men and women of America's Armed Forces in a ceremony at Fort Myer, Virginia. For the past 8 years, I have had no higher honor than serving as the Commander in Chief of these brave patriots. And when Laura and I depart for Texas later this month, we will take with us many inspiring memories of the valor that we have seen these brave Americans display time and again.

We saw their valor on September the 11th, 2001, in service members rushing into smoke-filled corridors to save their colleagues at the Pentagon and in planes patrolling the skies above New York City and Washington, DC.

We saw their valor in the days after that attack, when Americans crowded into recruiting centers across our country, raised their hands to serve, and pledged to defend our people and our freedom.

We saw their valor in the forces who deployed to Afghanistan within weeks of 9/11, closed down the terrorist training camps, and drove the Taliban from power.

We saw their valor in the fearless troops who stormed across the Iraqi desert and destroyed a regime that threatened America.

We saw their valor in battle-tested warriors who signed up for a second or third or fourth tour and made the troop surge in Iraq that I announced 2 years ago today one of the great successes in American military history.

America's Armed Forces have liberated more than 50 million people around the world and made our Nation safer. They have taken the fight to the terrorists abroad so that we have not had to face them here at home. And the world has seen something that almost no one thought possible: More than 7 years after September the 11th, there has not been another terrorist attack on American soil. This is no coincidence.

In addition to our military, many other Americans have worked tirelessly to ensure our safety in the years since 9/11. Law enforcement officials have worked to secure our country and remained watchful against future attacks. Intelligence analysts have

tracked information that allowed us to disrupt terrorist plots before they reached our shores. And homeland security agents have worked to secure our ports, our borders, and our skies.

We owe a debt of gratitude to all of these patriots. Because of their devotion to service, many Americans live their lives without the fear and uncertainty that they felt in the days just after 9/11. This continued safety has been a blessing. But we must never allow it to foster complacency. America still faces sworn enemies intent on striking our Nation and our people. And we must remain vigilant for as long as that threat remains.

I know that our men and women in uniform have remained vigilant. These Americans answer the call to defend freedom when it is under attack. They put their lives on the line to defend democracy and keep our country safe. And they inspire a nation with their selflessness and their courage. I am proud to have served as their Commander in Chief.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:55 a.m. on January 9 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 9 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at the Commissioning Ceremony of the USS *George H.W. Bush* in Norfolk, Virginia

January 10, 2009

The President. Thank you very much. Secretary Gates, thank you for your introduction. I know I speak on behalf of President 41 when I say it has been a privilege for both of us to serve with this fine and distinguished man.

I want to thank you all for coming. Laura and I are thrilled to be here to help commission an awesome ship and to honor an awesome man: President George H.W. Bush.

To prepare for this day, I went back through some of my father's letters. I thought it was especially interesting to read one that he wrote in the late 1940s. He sent it to a friend, and here's what he said; he said: "You should see Georgie now. Whenever I come home, he greets me and talks a blue streak, sentences disjointed of course." [*Laughter*] "He tries to say everything, and the results are often hilarious." [*Laughter*] Some things do not change. [*Laughter*]

The aircraft carrier, which we commission today, may be the Navy's newest ship, but she has already had an interesting past. Her catapult testing took place during an unseasonable cold snap. Her christening was thrown into chaos by a fierce nor'easter. And during construction, the shipyard was closed down because of Hurricane Isabel. So in keeping with this ship's short history, I brought along an equally strong force of nature: my mother. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Vice President and Lynne, thank you for joining us. Vice President Cheney has been a fabulous Vice President of the United States. Governor Kaine, thank you for your welcoming remarks. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, I appreciate you joining us. Other members of the administration and their families; the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen; CNO Gary Roughead; Captain O'Flaherty; other member of the United States Armed Forces and their families; shipyard workers and managers; members of our family who have joined us; and all the friends of George H.W. Bush: We are glad you are here.

The story of the USS *George H.W. Bush* begins in the early days of World War II, when our dad enlisted in the United States Navy. Like many servicemen deployed overseas, he was sustained by a girl he loved back home. From her dorm room, she knitted socks for him. In remote Pacific atolls, he collected seashells for her. And when he returned home from war, the first thing he did was to make her his bride. And for 64 years ago this week, the love of my father's life has been Barbara Bush.

Over the years, our parents have built a family bound forever by closeness, warmth, and unconditional love. Jeb, Neil, Marvin, and Doro and I will always feel blessed to have had the best father anyone could ever ask for. We will always be inspired by the faith, humor, patriotism, and compassion he taught us through his own example. And for

as long we live, we will carry with us dad's other lessons: That integrity and honor are worth more than any title or treasure, and that the truest strength can come from the gentlest soul.

George H.W. Bush has the deep love of his family, the admiration of his friends, and the thanks of a grateful nation. So today we are faced with the—[*applause*]. So what do you give a guy who has been blessed and has just about everything he has ever needed? Well, an aircraft carrier. [*Laughter*] The ship that bears our dad's name is more than 95,000 tons of aluminum and steel. She will carry nearly 6,000 of the finest sailors and marines in the world. She represents the craftsmanship of many skilled builders and thousands of hours of preparation. And so I congratulate all of you on this tremendous achievement.

This ship is a fitting tribute to a generation of men with whom my dad was privileged to serve. She's also a tribute to a new generation of American soldiers and sailors and Coast Guard men and women, airmen and marines who have stepped forward to defend the United States America. Again our troops are facing down a brutal enemy. Again they are making America and the world safer. And again they will come home in victory.

People often ask what I treasure most about being the President. Nothing comes close to the honor of being your Commander in Chief. Every day, I'm amazed by the skill and courage of our men and women in uniform. And as we send the USS *George H.W. Bush* into service, I know you will do credit to the sailors who served before you and the good man for whom this ship is named. I ask that God protect this ship and let her know only victory and peace. And I ask God's continued blessings on our wonderful Nation.

Thank you.

[*At this point, Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter gave brief remarks.*]

The President. I hereby place the United States Ship *George H.W. Bush* in commission. May God bless and guide this warship and all who shall sail in her.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:43 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Tim Kaine of Virginia; Adm. Gary Roughead, USN, Chief of Naval Operations; and Capt. Kevin O'Flaherty, USN, commanding officer, USS *George H.W. Bush*. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of former President George H.W. Bush. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Interview With Brit Hume of FOX News

January 7, 2009

Mr. Hume. Mr. President, thank you for doing this.

President Bush. Yes, sir.

Mr. Hume. Welcome back to FOX News Sunday.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

Last Days in Office

Mr. Hume. Less than 2 weeks to go, how do you feel?

President Bush. You know, I've got mixed emotions. I'm going to miss being the Commander in Chief of the military. Earlier the past week, I had the honor of having a military parade that said goodbye to the Commander in Chief, and it was an emotional moment for me and Laura.

Mr. Hume. Why?

President Bush. Just because I've got such great respect for the men and women who wear the uniform. And I've been through a lot with them. I have called upon them to do hard tasks. I have met with the families of the fallen. I have been to Walter Reed to see the wounded. And I have been incredibly inspired by their courage, their bravery, their sacrifice.

And I'm going to miss all the folks who have made our life so comfortable here in the White House.

On the other hand, I am looking forward to going back to Texas. I love Texas. I love my wife. And I'm excited about the next chapter in my life. And so all three of those things, you know, are the sweet part of the—what's going to take place on January the 20th.

Reflections on the President's Time in Office

Mr. Hume. People who come to see you here and meet with you, from the outside, are continually taken by surprise by your evident good humor and good mood and the fact that with low poll ratings and various troubles besetting the country and all you've been through, that you're not down——

President Bush. Yes.

Mr. Hume. ——that you're fine. And everybody remarks on it. How do you explain that?

President Bush. Well, I'm better than fine. I am proud of the accomplishments of this administration. I am thankful for the people that have worked so hard to serve our country. I know I gave it my all for 8 years. And I did not sell my soul for the sake of popularity. And so when I get back home and look in the mirror, I will be proud of what I see.

President's Principles

Mr. Hume. You have said that you did not compromise your principles in the interest of popularity. How would you describe those principles?

President Bush. Well, one principle is I believe in the universality of freedom; that there is an Almighty, and a gift of that Almighty to every man, woman, and child is freedom. And therefore, it's incumbent upon those of us with influence to act upon that principle.

And I'll give you a classic example. During the darkest days of Iraq, people came to me and said, "You're creating incredible political difficulties for us." And I said, "Oh, really, what do you suggest I do?" Their suggest—some suggested, retreat, pull out of Iraq. But I have faith that freedom exists in people's souls, and therefore, if given a chance, democracy—an Iraqi style democracy could survive and work. I didn't compromise that principle for the sake of trying to bail out my political party, for example.

Presidential Powers

Mr. Hume. Talk to me about the Presidency as you found it, its powers, its prerogatives, and how you feel you're leaving it.

President Bush. My Presidency was defined by the attack on the country, and therefore, used the powers inherent in the Constitution to defend this country.

Mr. Hume. Did you find them intact?

President Bush. I found—yes, I did find the Presidential powers intact. I have at times used those powers in ways that people had not anticipated. For example, the idea of, within the law, being able to have our folks question known killers about their intention. Now, many of the decisions I made are being adjudicated. And of course, I have lived by, and future Presidents will live by, the decisions of the Supreme Court. But as a wartime President, what remained intact, by the way, was the Constitution——

Mr. Hume. Right.

President Bush. ——which we have honored.

Checks and Balances in Government

Mr. Hume. It has been argued that what you sought to do is actually expand the powers of the Presidency, or in the eyes of some—perhaps in the eyes of the Vice President—to restore them. How do you see that?

President Bush. I see the relationship between the Presidency and the judiciary and the legislative branch as constantly changing throughout the history of the country. And the key thing that's important is that there still be checks and balances. And so however I interpreted the Constitution, I kept in mind what the Constitution said the legality of what my decisions were. But I also fully understood the checks and balances inherent in our system.

Presidential Powers

Mr. Hume. Now, you've spoken of the tools that you believe you put in place and which your successor will now inherit.

President Bush. Yes.

Mr. Hume. How worried are you, if at all, that those tools will be eroded, relinquished in the—because some of them have been——

President Bush. Slightly criticized. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Hume. Well, to say the least.

President Bush. I would hope that the team that is—has the honor of serving the

country will take a hard look at the realities of the world and the tools now in place to protect the United States from further attack. I would hope they would take a sober assessment, and I believe they will.

Mr. Hume. And what will they find?

President Bush. Well, they will find that with a considerable amount of care and concern for civil liberties, for example, that I have put in place procedures that will enable the professionals to better learn the intentions of Al Qaida, for example. They will realize, I think, when they really study the issue carefully, that we have gone from an administration that was accused of not connecting dots to an administration that is connecting dots, you know, linking pieces of information to better protect the country, with the civil liberties of our citizens in mind.

Intelligence Gathering Program/War on Terror

Mr. Hume. Now, the enhanced interrogation techniques, as some call them—torture, as others call them——

President Bush. Yes.

Mr. Hume. ——are being argued over to this hour. Some are saying you never get any good information by rough stuff, and others have said, more than once, that if we hadn't used these techniques, we wouldn't have had vital information and attacks could have been or would have been carried out on this country. Your view of that.

President Bush. My view is that the techniques were necessary and are necessary to be used on a rare occasion to get information necessary to protect the American people. One such person who gave us information was Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. He was the mastermind of the September the 11th, 2001, attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people on our soil.

And I'm in the Oval Office, and I am told that we have captured Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, and the professionals believe he has information necessary to secure the country. So I ask what tools are available for us to find information from him, and they gave me a list of tools. And I said, are these tools deemed to be legal? And so we got legal opinions before any decision was made. And I think when people study the history of this particular episode——

Mr. Hume. Well, what happened?

President Bush. ——they'll find out we gained good information from Khalid Sheikh Mohammed in order to protect our country.

Mr. Hume. Well, how good and how important? And what's the——

President Bush. We believe that the information we gained helped save lives on American soil.

Mr. Hume. Can you be more specific than that?

President Bush. Well, I have said in speeches and, as a matter of fact, when this program was leaked to the press, I actually gave a speech that said to the American people, yes, we're doing this. And—but I also emphasized we were doing it within the law.

Look, I understand why people can get carried away on this issue. But generally, they don't know the facts. And by the way, one of the interesting things that did take place is before anything happened on this particular program that we did brief Members of Congress.

Mr. Hume. Yes.

President Bush. We had an obligation to share information with the legislative branch. And all I can tell the American people is we better have tools in place that are legal and that can help us protect the American people from an enemy that still exists.

And my concern is not for President-elect Obama, because I'm confident that he understands the nature of the world and understands the need to protect America. But I am concerned that America, at some point in time, lets down her guard. And if we ever do that, the country will become highly vulnerable.

Mr. Hume. Well, how badly would it hurt, in your view, if this—these enhanced interrogation techniques that some call torture were abandoned and were not used?

President Bush. Yes, well, obviously, I feel like it would be a problem because these are tools that we have in place. I do want to—you know, I firmly reject the word "torture."

Mr. Hume. I understand that.

President Bush. Everything this administration did was—had a legal basis to it; otherwise, we would not have done it.

Secondly, everything we did was in consultation with professionals in our Government who understand, you know, how to use techniques in a way that gets information with—you know, within the law, necessary to protect the American people.

And I just can't imagine what it would be like to be President without these tools available and we captured a known killer who might have had information about the next attack on America.

Mr. Hume. Right.

President Bush. See, what some don't understand, evidently, is that we're at war. And it's a different kind of war, where an enemy uses asymmetrical warfare and they lie in wait and find a soft spot, ready to attack again. And they're willing to kill as many innocent people as they can to advance their agenda.

Central Intelligence Agency

Mr. Hume. Right. Speaking of professionals, in the intelligence area, how do you view the selection of Leon Panetta to head the CIA?

President Bush. I really don't feel comfortable commenting upon President-elect Obama's supposed choices, in this case. My only advice would be to recognize that the CIA is full of incredibly bright, hard-working, decent professionals who have got one thing in mind, and that is to serve the United States.

Mr. Hume. And yet this administration, to some extent, has been bedeviled by intelligence leaks believed to have come from the CIA. They seem—and there has been a degree of tension, I think it's probably an understatement to say, between the administration—or the White House, at least, and the CIA.

President Bush. No, I don't think so, Brit. I think that there have been disappointing moments when information came out of the Agency that—but the relationship has been fabulous up and down the line with the CIA.

Mr. Hume. Really?

President Bush. Oh, yes. I would say—I go out there quite frequently, and—or I have gone out there fairly often, I guess, is the best way to put it. And 99 percent of the people out there are anxious to help the administration do its job in a good way. And you can't stop leaks. And you don't know how many people were leaking, but I can assure you the vast majority of people in the CIA were very cooperative and have my highest respect.

I meet with the CIA every day of my Presidency, except for Sundays, since I've been President, at the same time: 7:30 on Saturday, 8 o'clock on every other day. And I will tell you that it is a fascinating experience to be briefed by CIA analysts. It's like taking a geopolitical course, international affairs course, every single day of the Presidency.

President-Elect Barack Obama

Mr. Hume. You've had now some further occasions to meet with Barack Obama and get to know him a little bit better, a man you really didn't know. How did you—how did your interaction with him go?

President Bush. It was a very straightforward——

Mr. Hume. How did you find him?

President Bush. How did I like him? I liked him.

Mr. Hume. Were you—other than——

President Bush. He's obviously—listen, the man is obviously a charismatic person.

Mr. Hume. Right.

President Bush. And the man is able to persuade people that they should trust him, and he's got something—he's got a lot going for him.

And I was—you know, wish him all the best. The reason we had the dinner, or the lunch—we call them dinners in Texas—the lunch at the White House was so that he could hear from the current President and former Presidents that we want him to succeed. And he is an engaging person, and I am very impressed by the priority he places on his family.

Republican Party's Future

Mr. Hume. Now, your political family, the Republican Party——

President Bush. Yes, sir.

Mr. Hume. ——what do you think is its likely fortunes going forward? How have you left it? What does it need to do?

President Bush. I think—look, I mean, obviously, we got whipped in 2008. And there will be a new wave of leadership arriving on the scene.

I can remember the '64 elections, the Goldwater—the Johnson landslide against Barry Goldwater, and we were—everybody said the party was wiped out. And then a whole new wave of Republicans ran, including George H.W. Bush, who got elected to the United States Congress from the Seventh Congressional District. Same thing will happen. But it's very important for our party not to narrow its focus, not to become so inward-looking that we drive people away from a philosophy that is compassionate and decent.

And I would—my call for our party is to be open-minded about——

Mr. Hume. About what?

President Bush. Well, different people's opinions. We shouldn't have litmus tests as to whether or not you can be a Republican.

Mr. Hume. Right.

President Bush. And we should be open-minded about big issues like immigration reform, because if we're viewed as anti-somebody—in other words, if the party is viewed as anti-immigrant, then another fellow may say, "Well, if they're against the immigrant, they may be against me." We've got to be a party for a better future, and for hope.

Mr. Hume. You got—do you see new ideas out there that have not been a part of your own agenda or those of your Republican predecessors that might reignite the party's fortunes?

President Bush. You know, look, I think that we shouldn't change our philosophy.

Mr. Hume. Right.

President Bush. We may want to change our messaging. We definitely want to change messengers. We need a new group of leaders. You know, but the idea of keeping taxes low——

Mr. Hume. Do you see them emerging? Do you see any—do you see any emerging who you could identify?

President Bush. Well, I had one in mind——

Mr. Hume. Who's that?

President Bush. ——but he evidently didn't agree with his older brother.

Mr. Hume. You're speaking, of course, about Jeb——

President Bush. That would be Governor Jeb Bush.

Mr. Hume. Right.

President Bush. But listen, there will be, you know, leaders. I mean, there's a lot of bright young guys and women in our party that will emerge. And parties go through cycles. There have been parts—times in our political history when the Democrats have felt like there was no future for them. And, you know—and so I'm optimistic about it. I don't want the party to feel like it's got to sell its soul on defending the country; that freedom is transformative; that we've got to be compassionate conservatives; that tax—low taxes make sense; that the military needs to be supported. I mean, there's a lot of just basic tenets to our party that make a lot of sense to the average person.

Post-Presidency Agenda

Mr. Hume. You have indicated that you've found this job to be fascinating; everybody does. It's probably the most interesting job in the world. Now you go from doing the most interesting job in the world to being out on your own. How do you feel about that? What do you think your life is going to be like, just sort of day to day? Will you be more time in Dallas, more time at your ranch? How do you expect to spend your time?

President Bush. Yes, it's an interesting question. And I've begun to think about that, because I can remember with a great sense of anticipation coming to Washington, DC, to be the President of the United States. And I have the same sense of anticipation heading out of political life, but without the sense of gravity.

Mr. Hume. Right.

President Bush. And so I don't—I'm going to be fairly footloose for a while. I'm confident Laura will have enough tasks for me to keep me busy. But I imagine I'll spend a fair amount of time in Dallas working on the policy center that will be associated with

a library on the SMU campus. And I'm excited about that, because I do want to continue to promote not a political party, not my personality or my record, but a set of values that I think are very important for the country.

And, you know, I plan on writing a book.

Mr. Hume. Do you?

President Bush. I do.

Mr. Hume. A history of your Presidency?

President Bush. You know, I'm not quite exactly sure what it's going to be, but I'm toying with the idea of maybe describing the toughest decisions I had to make as President and the context in which I made them, because one of the things that——

Mr. Hume. How soon will we see this book, do you think?

President Bush. That's the kind of question I better not answer, because——

Mr. Hume. Well, do you feel some urgency about getting it done?

President Bush. Well, I'll say 2 years and it will be 4.

Mr. Hume. Got it.

President Bush. I don't know. I mean, yes, I'd like to get it done. I am a type A personality that—you know, I require things to do. And I bet once I get going on this book, I'll be able to get 'er done. But it's—what's evident to me is that it is very hard for people to remember what life was like a mere 4 or 5 years ago. And it's going to be very important for me to recreate the environment in which I had to make certain decisions, particularly the environment right after September the 11th, 2001.

Mr. Hume. Right. Mr. President, thank you for this. Please bear with us, we need to take a break. And when we return, we will have a special visitor. Stay with us.

[*At this point, there was a pause in the interview. It then began again as follows.*]

President's Relationship With His Father

Mr. Hume. Well, we're pleased now to be joined not only of course by President Bush, the current President Bush, but by his father. Mr. President 41, welcome.

Former President George H.W. Bush. Thank you, Brit.

Mr. Hume. I believe this is the first time you two gentlemen have ever been interviewed together.

Former President Bush. I think so. It may be the first time we've been asked to be interviewed. I don't know. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Hume. Well, we're delighted to have you. Thank you very much.

Former President Bush. No, that's not true, but we've just gone our separate ways on these interviews.

Mr. Hume. In some sense, it has at least seemed that during your son's Presidency, that while you guys obviously were in touch—your family matters, much to discuss—that apart from that, there wasn't a lot of give and take. Is that true?

President Bush. Well, that's all it takes for give and take. I mean, you don't need—if you mean, am I calling up dad—I mean, "George, here's what you got to do now on Iraq," or something; no, I didn't do that. And we sometimes would talk about policy. But I was determined to stay out of his way and avoid speculation of what's the old guy think. I mean, you don't need that.

Mr. Hume. Well, now it can be told. [*Laughter*] Discuss if you will, both of you, the extent of your consultations on policy and political matters as—while you were President—the frequency of it.

President Bush. See, the interesting thing is that a President has got plenty of advisers, but what a President never has is someone who gave him unconditional love. And therefore, when I talked to my dad, I was more interested in the father-son relationship. You got a lot of people who can give you advice, but you rarely have people who can pick up the phone and say, "I love you, son," or, "Hang in there, son," and be—and provide the kind of comfort that a President needs on occasion.

The Presidency and Public Opinion

Mr. Hume. You have said that when your father was President, particularly toward the end—a rough year politically, in 1992—that that hurt you more than it seemed to hurt him. Is that true?

President Bush. Well, I said that being the son of a President was a lot harder than being the President.

Mr. Hume. And how about being the father of the President?

Former President Bush. Tough at times, only when you see criticism you know is very unfair. But I didn't—I tried not to speak up; it might just exacerbate the problem for him. But when I saw things I knew were grossly unfair in the press, in the print, anywhere, it hurt. It hurt Barbara, and it hurt me. But it's better not to go forth and sally forth and try to take the offense——

President Bush. And by the way, I——

Mr. Hume. Well, did it hurt you more than the criticism that you took as President?

Former President Bush. I think it hurt more, yes.

Mr. Hume. Do you feel that way too, that it hurt you more than——

President Bush. Absolutely. Gosh, I was furious. I got the reputation——

Mr. Hume. ——about stuff about him?

President Bush. Yes. I got the reputation of being slightly hot-headed at times and, you know, it was an accurate characteristic, because I was ready to duke it out when I saw people say things that were unfair about dad. And the other thing that's interesting is, though, I can remember calling he and mom and saying, "Don't worry about me." In other words, I knew that they were taking on, you know, the anxiety, and I knew what it was like to have somebody you love being hammered in the press.

And so I spent a fair amount of time, as I recall, calling them and saying, "Look, don't worry about me, things are going to be fine, my spirits are good, Laura is doing great." And, you know, I think people sit out there and say, "They must have had some kind of, you know, relationship that is kept very clinical and very advisory, touched up." But this is a loving relationship. This is—you know, he's the head of a fabulous family, and whether it be me as the President, or Jeb as the Governor, or Neil, Marvin, and Doro, dad's phone calls are not, you know, you must do this or that; his phone calls are, I love you, and it's very powerful.

President's Legacy

Mr. Hume. Now, your son's race is days away from having been run. How do you regard his Presidency?

Former President Bush. Very positively. And I think history will——

Mr. Hume. Why?

Former President Bush. Well, because you make a tough decision, and stay with it. I mean, he's been tested unlike any other President with this 9/11. So he passed the test.

President Bush. He's going to be judged great too. He was a—he was almost too humble to be President. And when history finally gets objective, they will be able to say a lot of positive things about George Bush. I cannot worry. You know, I tell people I'm still reading biographies of George Washington or analyses of his Presidency. And if they're still writing about the first guy, the 41st guy and the 43d guy simply don't need to worry about it.

Former President Bush. We won't be around to worry about it, that's for sure. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. Yes.

Former President Bush's Health

Mr. Hume. Now, I see you getting along—getting around now on a cane, and—is that a condition that's going to get better, in your judgment? Are you going to be—is this a remnant from one of your hip operations, or what do you got going there?

Former President Bush. This is what they call old age.

Mr. Hume. I understand about that myself. [*Laughter*]

Former President Bush. No, it's—no, no pain, no hip—I think I have an imbalance that came from a back operation.

Mr. Hume. Oh.

President Bush. Let me ask you something. Is it true that you said publicly that you're going to jump out of the airplane again?

Former President Bush. True. But that doesn't take anything but just going up there with some big—strapped on to some big Golden Knight or someone, and it's a thrill.

President Bush. You're going to have trouble convincing mother of that. [*Laughter*]

Former President Bush. No, I won't.

Mr. Hume. What about you? What do you think about that? Do you want him to do that?

President Bush. I think he's a nut to jump out of an airplane at age 70, 75, 80, and 85. I find it—actually, I think it's cool.

Former President Bush. I told you the reasons, though. You don't want to sit around just because you're an old guy, drooling in the corner. [*Laughter*] And secondly, you want to send a message out to around the world, actually, because of the prominence of the Presidency, that you can still do stuff. Old guys can still do stuff, get involved in things.

President Bush. You can drool and jump at the same time. [*Laughter*]

Former President Bush. That's right. [*Laughter*]

Post-Presidency Agenda

Mr. Hume. Now, you're in Houston. You've chosen Dallas.

President Bush. Yes.

Mr. Hume. What's up with that?

President Bush. Well, I want to be close to SMU. And that's where our policy center/library/archives are going to be.

Mr. Hume. You okay with that?

Former President Bush. And they had a Dallas connection——

Mr. Hume. Did you hope that he'd come to Houston?

Former President Bush. What?

Mr. Hume. Did you hope that he'd move to Houston when—

Former President Bush. No, I never thought he would move to Houston.

President Bush. Plus, Houston is 2 hours away from—I mean, Dallas is 2 hours away from Crawford. And I plan on spending some time down there in Crawford.

Former President Bush. And Laura had some Dallas connections, so it made sense.

President Bush. Yes.

Central Intelligence Agency

Mr. Hume. Now, I want to ask you a little bit about the intelligence agency situation. After all, you came as an outsider to intelligence.

Former President Bush. Total outsider.

Mr. Hume. You weren't an intelligence professional. And now you got the building out there named after you. So obviously, it could work. Your thoughts about, not to the Panetta nomination or the Panetta selection specifically, but about the general idea of what it takes to be the—to run the intelligence agency effectively?

Former President Bush. Well, I heard what the President said in his interview with you, and I agree with that, that there's so many outstanding people there. And so I went in there at a time the Agency was under tremendous fire; the Pike report, the Church report, and they were just decimating the morale of the Agency. So I viewed my job not to learn all the trade craft, but to defend the quality and the character of the Agency and the people there. And that was perhaps an easier assignment than knowing all about every intrigue of intelligence.

But all I hope is that whoever goes out there goes with confidence in the CIA and the people around CIA. They're good people; more Ph.D.'s than many universities and many different disciplines. And everybody just thinks it's kind of a James Bond operation.

And so I think that whoever assumes that job—and I have had great confidence in the President's pick—will express confidence in the Agency and the people that make it up.

Relationship Between Past, Present, and Future Presidents

Mr. Hume. Talk a little bit, if you will, about this relationship among people who are in or have been in this remarkable job; it's a pretty exclusive club. And I know you had a lunch this week to bring them together with the President-elect. But what is that atmosphere like among former Presidents? Are all the old political differences aside? Is that all over with?

Former President Bush. Yes, I think so. And I think everyone—every member of that club realizes there can only be one President; he's not going to be turning to you every day saying, "What will I do now?"

You read a lot of kind of intellectual books, but what we need is the advice—formalize the advice of former Presidents. He doesn't need a lot of advice from former Presidents.

And he needs to—the current President needs to have good people around him who will help him pursue the goals he's set out.

And so I don't think there's much to it except collegiality and the idea that you want to be out there if he needs support.

President-Elect Obama's Administration

Mr. Hume. Now, you've watched this range of appointments that Barack Obama has announced; your take on it, your feeling about it?

President Bush. I've been impressed.

Mr. Hume. Why?

President Bush. Well, because, one, he showed decisiveness. Two, he has picked people that are capable and competent people. And I think he's had a very good transition. And frankly, I think Josh Bolten, my Chief of Staff, and the people that work here in the White House have also had a good transition, because they have reached out to the President-elect's team at all levels. And the message is, we want there to be a seamless move from us leaving and you coming in, and we want you to succeed.

And so I've been very pleased with what I've seen over the last—since the election.

Mr. Hume. Do you agree with that?

Former President Bush. Yes, totally. Totally. And if I didn't, I wouldn't tell you—same policy. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Hume. Well, what—look, you—this is very like you, and like you as well, to refrain from comment on the other public—political figures, the incoming President and so on. Why?

Former President Bush. Well, why be out there looking like you're carping and criticizing and know everything? I mean, I've heard what the President said about President Obama—President-elect Obama. I feel the same way; support him where you can, and don't go out there criticizing and carping. You look small yourself for one thing, but that's not the main reason; the main reason is he needs support. And if it's something you disagree with violently, sit on the sidelines and shut up.

President Bush. There will be plenty of opportunities for people to carp, trust me. I mean, this is a job that——

Former President Bush. Oh, yes, I know there will.

President Bush. ——and dad knows as well as anybody, it's—you'll get plenty of opinions when you're the President, and you'll get plenty of flattering statements, and you'll get your fair share of not so complimentary comments.

I also remember what it was like to have people disappoint you. I mean, you'll be getting—you'll be picking up the newspaper and reading comments from people that you just say, well, I just can't believe that that person would be so kind of not respectful of their own office, much less yours, to call those kind of names. And that—to me that has been the biggest disappointment in the political process up here; there has been this kind of bitterness by a few people to the point where they don't want to have a logical discussion or a civil discussion about policy, they just want to tear you down. And——

Mr. Hume. Do you think that's gotten worse since your days in the White House?

Former President Bush. I don't know that it's gotten worse, but it's offensive, very offensive. And I always—I'll agree with the President that when you have somebody you have your own trust in, and that person for his own gain—thinks it's for his own gain—goes out and gives kind of "here's the inside story," "here's what they're saying, but here's what's really happening," playing the leak game. It's just horrible. And every administration has that. But I think President George Bush here has been lucky; there hasn't been that many of them.

President Bush. Yes.

Former President Bush. And I think we were pretty lucky.

Advice From Former President Bush

Mr. Hume. When you left this office, it was reported at least that it was—it took a while, you had a period of adjustment, and it was tough for you at first. And then, obviously, you hit your stride and found your life. And how was that? And what advice do you have for your son as he embarks on a similar experience?

Former President Bush. Well, looking back lo those many years, I don't remember it being extraordinarily difficult. I mean, I

felt unfulfilled agenda, for example; I felt things I'd like to have done.

But once you got back to Texas, it wasn't difficult at all; you just start in a new life. And part of mine was to build around our library at Texas A&M in just the way he's looking forward to having his library. You get a lot of strength from there; you bring a lot of people there to talk. So it's not that difficult.

President Bush. His advice was come back to Texas. But he didn't need to give it, because that's exactly where we're headed.

Former President Bush. Yes, people hover around the Potomac River, whether Senators or Congressmen that have been defeated. They'd better go home; that's what I think.

Mr. Hume. Gentleman, thank you very much for doing this.

President Bush. Yes, sir, thank you.

Mr. Hume. It was a pleasure. Thank you, sir.

[*The interview moved to the Oval Office, and continued as follows.*]

Working in the Oval Office

Mr. Hume. Now, as you stand here together, Mr. President 41, what is your most vivid memory of your time in this office, something that happened in this very room?

Former President Bush. Well, I can't think of many, but I remember Colin Powell reaching under this desk—a desk and pulling out the telephone to call Schwarzkopf to see if the mission had been accomplished. After that, they said it's time to shut down this war——

Mr. Hume. In Kuwait.

Former President Bush. One hundred hours—we'd done what we said we wanted to do, and he called up—and that one sticks in my mind as a dramatic moment. But there are many, many other exciting things. But that one stands out.

Mr. Hume. Can you think of your most anxious moment here?

Former President Bush. Anxious moment?

Mr. Hume. Yes.

Former President Bush. I really can't.

Mr. Hume. I mean, you had to give that order.

Former President Bush. Yes, but I can't think of any—a real anxious moment that stands out among others. There are probably plenty of them, but——

President Bush's First Moments in Office

Mr. Hume. When you first took office, took occupancy of this office, as I recall, the two of you had a brief moment together.

President Bush. Right.

Mr. Hume. Can you reflect on that? Do you remember it?

President Bush. We had just witnessed the Inaugural Parade, and I came upstairs at the White House up there, and I think you were taking a nap.

Former President Bush. No, I was in the bathtub, thawing out.

President Bush. Yes, he was in the bathtub. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Hume. Were you really?

Former President Bush. Yes.

President Bush. Of course, I yelled through the door. Anyway, I said, "Why don't you come over and meet me in the Oval Office?" And so I got in here before he did, and I was just getting a sense of what it was like to be in the shrine of democracy. And then I looked up, and in comes 41. And it was a moving moment. It was a great day for me, a very proud moment.

Mr. Hume. Can you remember what was said?

President Bush. Not really. I had a weird chair, as I recall. It had like an electric cord on it. And I don't—did you use the weird chair with the electric cord?

Former President Bush. Yes.

President Bush. Well, I didn't use the weird chair with the electric cord, but he showed me how to operate it.

Mr. Hume. What did it do?

President Bush. Jiggle or something.

Mr. Hume. Where you put on your fingers, turned off the lights, and magic fingers make you feel all right? That kind of thing? [*Laughter*]

Former President Bush. I remember it slightly differently. I remember being in the bathtub after that ice-cold Inaugural Parade or whatever, and Ramsey, one of the guys that was over in the White House said, "Get out of the bathtub, Mr. President, you got

to get over; the President wants you right now." [*Laughter*] "Come on, I'm just thawing out here." "Get over there." [*Laughter*] So I went over, and it was very, very moving.

President Bush. It was an awesome moment, it really was, as you can imagine.

Message From the Outgoing President to the Incoming President

Mr. Hume. It is the custom of departing Presidents is to leave a note in the drawer.

President Bush. Yes. Actually, it's a custom to leave a note upstairs at the—if I'm not mistaken—the residence.

Mr. Hume. Well, however you do it. Do you recall what you wrote?

Former President Bush. Reagan wrote me, and it was in the desk. And I think I did the same thing.

President Bush. Oops.

Mr. Hume. And what did you say, roughly?

Former President Bush. I don't remember, just good luck

Mr. Hume. To Bill Clinton?

President Bush. I'm going to write one.

Mr. Hume. Have you thought about it—what you're going to say?

President Bush. I have not. I think it's probably best I wait for, you know, right before he and his family come to ride down Pennsylvania Avenue with me.

The Oval Office

Mr. Hume. This office has been used in different ways by different Presidents—atmosphere, formality, in some less formality than others. As I recall, you never set foot in this office, Mr. President 41, without a jacket and tie. Is that—that was true wasn't it?

Former President Bush. That was my policy, I think.

Mr. Hume. And how about you? Did you——

President Bush. I thought it was the right policy.

Mr. Hume. Has that always been the case?

President Bush. Yes, I may have come in here once in over 8 years without a tie on—or twice. But I come in here to work. And as I said, I refer to this as a shrine to democracy, and it is, and it needs to be treated that way. And I had a fabulous mentor.

Former President Bush. Now, I think it's important to treat this place with respect, and that's what we tried to do.

Mr. Hume. Well, I'm sure you'll be remembered for having done just that. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

Former President Bush. Brit, good luck to you.

Mr. Hume. Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The interview began taping at 10:32 a.m. in the Cabinet Room and continued in the Oval Office at the White House, for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to former Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida. Former President Bush referred to former Rep. Otis G. Pike of New York; Michael V. Hayden, director, Central Intelligence Agency; Gen. Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.), former chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, USA (Ret.), former commander, U.S. Central Command. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 11. A portion of this interview could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on the Death of Cardinal Pio Laghi

January 11, 2009

Laura and I send our deepest condolences to Pope Benedict XVI and all Catholics on the passing of Cardinal Pio Laghi. Cardinal Laghi was a friend who, in his more than 60 years of service to the Catholic Church, worked tirelessly for peace and justice in our world. As the Papal Nuncio to the United States during the final years of the cold war, and in his many other assignments, Cardinal Laghi always strove to unite people of all religions and promote reconciliation, religious freedom, and tolerance. Cardinal Laghi holds an especially important place in the hearts of the American people, having served as the first Papal Nuncio to the United States following the formal establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and the Holy See in 1984.

On behalf of all Americans, Laura and I join Catholics around the world to offer our gratitude for the courageous service and life

of Cardinal Laghi and commit ourselves to carrying his peaceful message forward.

Memorandum on Provision of Atomic Information to Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia

January 9, 2009

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Provision of Atomic Information to Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia

In your memorandum to me of August 1, 2008, you recommended that I approve pursuant to sections 123 and 144b. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, an agreement for cooperation within the context of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as between the Government of the United States and the following seven new members of NATO: the Republic of Bulgaria, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, Romania, the Slovak Republic, and the Republic of Slovenia, hereinafter the "New Parties." The subject agreement is the Agreement between the Parties to the North Atlantic Treaty for Co-operation Regarding Atomic Information, including a technical annex and security annex (hereinafter collectively referred to as the ATOMAL Agreement), which entered into force on March 12, 1965, with respect to the United States and the other members of NATO at that time.

Having considered your recommendations and the cooperation provided for in the ATOMAL Agreement with respect to the New Parties, in accordance with sections 123 and 144b. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, I hereby:

a. Determine that the performance of the ATOMAL Agreement, including the proposed cooperation and the proposed communication of Restricted Data thereunder, with respect to the New Parties, will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security.

b. Approve the ATOMAL Agreement with respect to the New Parties.

c. Authorize the Department of Defense to cooperate with the New Parties to the ATOMAL Agreement in the context of NATO upon satisfaction of the requirements of section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 12.

Directive on Arctic Region Policy

January 9, 2009

National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD–66

Homeland Security Presidential Directive/HSPD–25

Memorandum for the Vice President; the Secretary of State; the Secretary of the Treasury; the Secretary of Defense; the Attorney General; the Secretary of the Interior; the Secretary of Commerce; the Secretary of Health and Human Services; the Secretary of Transportation; the Secretary of Energy; the Secretary of Homeland Security; Chief of Staff; Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; Director of the Office of Management and Budget; Director of National Intelligence; Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Counsel to the President; Deputy National Security Advisor for International Economic Affairs; Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism; Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality; Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard; and Director of the National Science Foundation

Subject: Arctic Region Policy

I. Purpose

A. This directive establishes the policy of the United States with respect to the Arctic region and directs related implementation actions. This directive supersedes Presidential Decision Directive/NSC–26 (PDD–26; issued 1994) with respect to Arctic policy

but not Antarctic policy; PDD–26 remains in effect for Antarctic policy only.

B. This directive shall be implemented in a manner consistent with the Constitution and laws of the United States, with the obligations of the United States under the treaties and other international agreements to which the United States is a party, and with customary international law as recognized by the United States, including with respect to the law of the sea.

II. Background

A. The United States is an Arctic nation, with varied and compelling interests in that region. This directive takes into account several developments, including, among others:

1. Altered national policies on homeland security and defense;
2. The effects of climate change and increasing human activity in the Arctic region;
3. The establishment and ongoing work of the Arctic Council; and
4. A growing awareness that the Arctic region is both fragile and rich in resources.

III. Policy

A. It is the policy of the United States to:

1. Meet national security and homeland security needs relevant to the Arctic region;
2. Protect the Arctic environment and conserve its biological resources;
3. Ensure that natural resource management and economic development in the region are environmentally sustainable;
4. Strengthen institutions for cooperation among the eight Arctic nations (the United States, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, and Sweden);
5. Involve the Arctic's indigenous communities in decisions that affect them; and
6. Enhance scientific monitoring and research into local, regional, and global environmental issues.

B. *National Security and Homeland Security Interests in the Artic*

1. The United States has broad and fundamental national security interests in the Arctic region and is prepared to operate either independently or in conjunction with other states to safeguard these interests. These interests include such matters as missile defense and early warning; deployment of sea and air systems for strategic sealift, strategic deterrence, maritime presence, and maritime security operations; and ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight.
2. The United States also has fundamental homeland security interests in preventing terrorist attacks and mitigating those criminal or hostile acts that could increase the United States vulnerability to terrorism in the Arctic region.
3. The Arctic region is primarily a maritime domain; as such, existing policies and authorities relating to maritime areas continue to apply, including those relating to law enforcement.[1] Human activity in the Arctic region is increasing and is projected to increase further in coming years. This requires the United States to assert a more active and influential national presence to protect its Arctic interests and to project sea power throughout the region.
4. The United States exercises authority in accordance with lawful claims of United States sovereignty, sovereign rights, and jurisdiction in the Arctic region, including sovereignty within the territorial sea, sovereign rights and jurisdiction within the United States exclusive economic zone and on the continental shelf, and appropriate control in the United States contiguous zone.
5. Freedom of the seas is a top national priority. The Northwest Passage is a

[1] These policies and authorities include Freedom of Navigation (PDD/NSC–32), the U.S. Policy on Protecting the Ocean Environment (PDD/NSC–36), Maritime Security Policy (NSPD–41/HSPD–13), and the National Strategy for Maritime Security (NSMS).

strait used for international navigation, and the Northern Sea Route includes straits used for international navigation; the regime of transit passage applies to passage through those straits. Preserving the rights and duties relating to navigation and overflight in the Arctic region supports our ability to exercise these rights throughout the world, including through strategic straits.

6. *Implementation*: In carrying out this policy as it relates to national security and homeland security interests in the Arctic, the Secretaries of State, Defense, and Homeland Security, in coordination with heads of other relevant executive departments and agencies, shall:

a. Develop greater capabilities and capacity, as necessary, to protect United States air, land, and sea borders in the Arctic region;

b. Increase Arctic maritime domain awareness in order to protect maritime commerce, critical infrastructure, and key resources;

c. Preserve the global mobility of United States military and civilian vessels and aircraft throughout the Arctic region;

d. Project a sovereign United States maritime presence in the Arctic in support of essential United States interests; and

e. Encourage the peaceful resolution of disputes in the Arctic region.

C. *International Governance*

1. The United States participates in a variety of fora, international organizations, and bilateral contacts that promote United States interests in the Arctic. These include the Arctic Council, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), wildlife conservation and management agreements, and many other mechanisms. As the Arctic changes and human activity in the region increases, the United States and other governments should consider, as appropriate, new international arrangements or enhancements to existing arrangements.

2. The Arctic Council has produced positive results for the United States by working within its limited mandate of environmental protection and sustainable development. Its subsidiary bodies, with help from many United States agencies, have developed and undertaken projects on a wide range of topics. The Council also provides a beneficial venue for interaction with indigenous groups. It is the position of the United States that the Arctic Council should remain a high-level forum devoted to issues within its current mandate and not be transformed into a formal international organization, particularly one with assessed contributions. The United States is nevertheless open to updating the structure of the Council, including consolidation of, or making operational changes to, its subsidiary bodies, to the extent such changes can clearly improve the Council's work and are consistent with the general mandate of the Council.

3. The geopolitical circumstances of the Arctic region differ sufficiently from those of the Antarctic region such that an "Arctic Treaty" of broad scope—along the lines of the Antarctic Treaty—is not appropriate or necessary.

4. The Senate should act favorably on U.S. accession to the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea promptly, to protect and advance U.S. interests, including with respect to the Arctic. Joining will serve the national security interests of the United States, including the maritime mobility of our Armed Forces worldwide. It will secure U.S. sovereign rights over extensive marine areas, including the valuable natural resources they contain. Accession will promote U.S. interests in the environmental health of the oceans. And it will give the United States a seat at the table when the rights that are vital to our interests are debated and interpreted.

5. *Implementation*: In carrying out this policy as it relates to international governance, the Secretary of State, in coordination with heads of other relevant executive departments and agencies, shall:

a. Continue to cooperate with other countries on Arctic issues through the United Nations (U.N.) and its specialized agencies, as well as through treaties such as the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Convention on Long

Range Transboundary Air Pollution and its protocols, and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer;

b. Consider, as appropriate, new or enhanced international arrangements for the Arctic to address issues likely to arise from expected increases in human activity in that region, including shipping, local development and subsistence, exploitation of living marine resources, development of energy and other resources, and tourism;

c. Review Arctic Council policy recommendations developed within the ambit of the Council's scientific reviews and ensure the policy recommendations are subject to review by Arctic governments; and

d. Continue to seek advice and consent of the United States Senate to accede to the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention.

D. *Extended Continental Shelf and Boundary Issues*

1. Defining with certainty the area of the Arctic seabed and subsoil in which the United States may exercise its sovereign rights over natural resources such as oil, natural gas, methane hydrates, minerals, and living marine species is critical to our national interests in energy security, resource management, and environmental protection. The most effective way to achieve international recognition and legal certainty for our extended continental shelf is through the procedure available to States Parties to the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea.

2. The United States and Canada have an unresolved boundary in the Beaufort Sea. United States policy recognizes a boundary in this area based on equidistance. The United States recognizes that the boundary area may contain oil, natural gas, and other resources.

3. The United States and Russia are abiding by the terms of a maritime boundary treaty concluded in 1990, pending its entry into force. The United States is prepared to enter the agreement into force once ratified by the Russian Federation.

4. *Implementation*: In carrying out this policy as it relates to extended continental shelf and boundary issues, the Secretary of State, in coordination with heads of other relevant executive departments and agencies, shall:

a. Take all actions necessary to establish the outer limit of the continental shelf appertaining to the United States, in the Arctic and in other regions, to the fullest extent permitted under international law;

b. Consider the conservation and management of natural resources during the process of delimiting the extended continental shelf; and

c. Continue to urge the Russian Federation to ratify the 1990 United States-Russia maritime boundary agreement.

E. *Promoting International Scientific Cooperation*

1. Scientific research is vital for the promotion of United States interests in the Arctic region. Successful conduct of U.S. research in the Arctic region requires access throughout the Arctic Ocean and to terrestrial sites, as well as viable international mechanisms for sharing access to research platforms and timely exchange of samples, data, and analyses. Better coordination with the Russian Federation, facilitating access to its domain, is particularly important.

2. The United States promotes the sharing of Arctic research platforms with other countries in support of collaborative research that advances fundamental understanding of the Arctic region in general and potential Arctic change in particular. This could include collaboration with bodies such as the Nordic Council and the European Polar Consortium, as well as with individual nations.

3. Accurate prediction of future environmental and climate change on a regional basis, and the delivery of near real-time information to end-users, requires obtaining, analyzing, and disseminating accurate data from the entire Arctic region, including both paleoclimatic data and observational data. The United States has made significant investments in the infrastructure needed to collect environmental data in the Arctic region, including the establishment of portions of an Arctic circumpolar observing network

through a partnership among United States agencies, academic collaborators, and Arctic residents. The United States promotes active involvement of all Arctic nations in these efforts in order to advance scientific understanding that could provide the basis for assessing future impacts and proposed response strategies.

4. United States platforms capable of supporting forefront research in the Arctic Ocean, including portions expected to be ice-covered for the foreseeable future, as well as seasonally ice-free regions, should work with those of other nations through the establishment of an Arctic circumpolar observing network. All Arctic nations are members of the Group on Earth Observations partnership, which provides a framework for organizing an international approach to environmental observations in the region. In addition, the United States recognizes that academic and research institutions are vital partners in promoting and conducting Arctic research.

5. *Implementation*: In carrying out this policy as it relates to promoting scientific international cooperation, the Secretaries of State, the Interior, and Commerce and the Director of the National Science Foundation, in coordination with heads of other relevant executive departments and agencies, shall:

a. Continue to play a leadership role in research throughout the Arctic region;
b. Actively promote full and appropriate access by scientists to Arctic research sites through bilateral and multilateral measures and by other means;
c. Lead the effort to establish an effective Arctic circumpolar observing network with broad partnership from other relevant nations;
d. Promote regular meetings of Arctic science ministers or research council heads to share information concerning scientific research opportunities and to improve coordination of international Arctic research programs;
e. Work with the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC) to promote research that is strategically linked to U.S. policies articulated in this directive, with input from the Arctic Research Commission; and
f. Strengthen partnerships with academic and research institutions and build upon the relationships these institutions have with their counterparts in other nations.

F. *Maritime Transportation in the Arctic Region*

1. The United States priorities for maritime transportation in the Arctic region are:

a. To facilitate safe, secure, and reliable navigation;
b. To protect maritime commerce; and
c. To protect the environment.

2. Safe, secure, and environmentally sound maritime commerce in the Arctic region depends on infrastructure to support shipping activity, search and rescue capabilities, short- and long-range aids to navigation, high-risk area vessel-traffic management, iceberg warnings and other sea ice information, effective shipping standards, and measures to protect the marine environment. In addition, effective search and rescue in the Arctic will require local, State, Federal, tribal, commercial, volunteer, scientific, and multinational cooperation.

3. Working through the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the United States promotes strengthening existing measures and, as necessary, developing new measures to improve the safety and security of maritime transportation, as well as to protect the marine environment in the Arctic region. These measures may include ship routing and reporting systems, such as traffic separation and vessel traffic management schemes in Arctic chokepoints; updating and strengthening of the Guidelines for Ships Operating in Arctic Ice-Covered Waters; underwater noise standards for commercial shipping; a review of shipping insurance issues; oil and other hazardous material pollution response agreements; and environmental standards.

4. *Implementation*: In carrying out this policy as it relates to maritime transportation in the Arctic region, the Secretaries of State, Defense, Transportation, Commerce, and Homeland Security, in coordination with heads of other relevant executive departments and agencies, shall:

a. Develop additional measures, in cooperation with other nations, to address issues that are likely to arise from expected increases in shipping into, out of, and through the Arctic region;
b. Commensurate with the level of human activity in the region, establish a risk-based capability to address hazards in the Arctic environment. Such efforts shall advance work on pollution prevention and response standards; determine basing and logistics support requirements, including necessary airlift and icebreaking capabilities; and improve plans and cooperative agreements for search and rescue;
c. Develop Arctic waterways management regimes in accordance with accepted international standards, including vessel traffic-monitoring and routing; safe navigation standards; accurate and standardized charts; and accurate and timely environmental and navigational information; and
d. Evaluate the feasibility of using access through the Arctic for strategic sealift and humanitarian aid and disaster relief.

G. *Economic Issues, Including Energy*

1. Sustainable development in the Arctic region poses particular challenges. Stakeholder input will inform key decisions as the United States seeks to promote economic and energy security. Climate change and other factors are significantly affecting the lives of Arctic inhabitants, particularly indigenous communities. The United States affirms the importance to Arctic communities of adapting to climate change, given their particular vulnerabilities.

2. Energy development in the Arctic region will play an important role in meeting growing global energy demand as the area is thought to contain a substantial portion of the world's undiscovered energy resources. The United States seeks to ensure that energy development throughout the Arctic occurs in an environmentally sound manner, taking into account the interests of indigenous and local communities, as well as open and transparent market principles. The United States seeks to balance access to, and development of, energy and other natural resources with the protection of the Arctic environment by ensuring that continental shelf resources are managed in a responsible manner and by continuing to work closely with other Arctic nations.

3. The United States recognizes the value and effectiveness of existing fora, such as the Arctic Council, the International Regulators Forum, and the International Standards Organization.

4. *Implementation*: In carrying out this policy as it relates to economic issues, including energy, the Secretaries of State, the Interior, Commerce, and Energy, in coordination with heads of other relevant executive departments and agencies, shall:

a. Seek to increase efforts, including those in the Arctic Council, to study changing climate conditions, with a view to preserving and enhancing economic opportunity in the Arctic region. Such efforts shall include inventories and assessments of villages, indigenous communities, subsistence opportunities, public facilities, infrastructure, oil and gas development projects, alternative energy development opportunities, forestry, cultural and other sites, living marine resources, and other elements of the Arctic's socioeconomic composition;
b. Work with other Arctic nations to ensure that hydrocarbon and other development in the Arctic region is carried out in accordance with accepted best practices and internationally recognized standards and the 2006 Group of Eight (G–8) Global Energy Security Principles;
c. Consult with other Arctic nations to discuss issues related to exploration, production, environmental and socioeconomic impacts, including drilling conduct, facility sharing, the sharing of environmental data, impact assessments, compatible monitoring programs, and reservoir management in areas with potentially shared resources;
d. Protect United States interests with respect to hydrocarbon reservoirs that

may overlap boundaries to mitigate adverse environmental and economic consequences related to their development;

e. Identify opportunities for international cooperation on methane hydrate issues, North Slope hydrology, and other matters;

f. Explore whether there is a need for additional fora for informing decisions on hydrocarbon leasing, exploration, development, production, and transportation, as well as shared support activities, including infrastructure projects; and

g. Continue to emphasize cooperative mechanisms with nations operating in the region to address shared concerns, recognizing that most known Arctic oil and gas resources are located outside of United States jurisdiction.

H. *Environmental Protection and Conservation of Natural Resources*

1. The Arctic environment is unique and changing. Increased human activity is expected to bring additional stressors to the Arctic environment, with potentially serious consequences for Arctic communities and ecosystems.

2. Despite a growing body of research, the Arctic environment remains poorly understood. Sea ice and glaciers are in retreat. Permafrost is thawing and coasts are eroding. Pollutants from within and outside the Arctic are contaminating the region. Basic data are lacking in many fields. High levels of uncertainty remain concerning the effects of climate change and increased human activity in the Arctic. Given the need for decisions to be based on sound scientific and socioeconomic information, Arctic environmental research, monitoring, and vulnerability assessments are top priorities. For example, an understanding of the probable consequences of global climate variability and change on Arctic ecosystems is essential to guide the effective long-term management of Arctic natural resources and to address socioeconomic impacts of changing patterns in the use of natural resources.

3. Taking into account the limitations in existing data, United States efforts to protect the Arctic environment and to conserve its natural resources must be risk-based and proceed on the basis of the best available information.

4. The United States supports the application in the Arctic region of the general principles of international fisheries management outlined in the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of December 10, 1982, relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks and similar instruments. The United States endorses the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems in the Arctic from destructive fishing practices and seeks to ensure an adequate enforcement presence to safeguard Arctic living marine resources.

5. With temperature increases in the Arctic region, contaminants currently locked in the ice and soils will be released into the air, water, and land. This trend, along with increased human activity within and below the Arctic, will result in increased introduction of contaminants into the Arctic, including both persistent pollutants (e.g., persistent organic pollutants and mercury) and airborne pollutants (e.g., soot).

6. *Implementation*: In carrying out this policy as it relates to environmental protection and conservation of natural resources, the Secretaries of State, the Interior, Commerce, and Homeland Security and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, in coordination with heads of other relevant executive departments and agencies, shall:

a. In cooperation with other nations, respond effectively to increased pollutants and other environmental challenges;

b. Continue to identify ways to conserve, protect, and sustainably manage Arctic species and ensure adequate enforcement presence to safeguard living marine resources, taking account of the changing ranges or distribution of some species in the Arctic. For species whose range includes areas both

within and beyond United States jurisdiction, the United States shall continue to collaborate with other governments to ensure effective conservation and management;

c. Seek to develop ways to address changing and expanding commercial fisheries in the Arctic, including through consideration of international agreements or organizations to govern future Arctic fisheries;

d. Pursue marine ecosystem-based management in the Arctic; and

e. Intensify efforts to develop scientific information on the adverse effects of pollutants on human health and the environment and work with other nations to reduce the introduction of key pollutants into the Arctic.

IV. Resources and Assets

A. Implementing a number of the policy elements directed above will require appropriate resources and assets. These elements shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and authorities of agencies, or heads of agencies, vested by law, and subject to the availability of appropriations. The heads of executive departments and agencies with responsibilities relating to the Arctic region shall work to identify future budget, administrative, personnel, or legislative proposal requirements to implement the elements of this directive.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This directive was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 12.

Message to the Congress Transmitting Provision of Atomic Information to Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia

January 9, 2009

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress, consistent with sections 123 and 144 b. of the Atomic Energy Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153 and 2164(b)), the text of the Agreement between the Parties to the North Atlantic Treaty for Co-operation Regarding Atomic Information, including a technical annex and security annex (hereinafter collectively referred to as the ATOMAL Agreement), as a proposed agreement for cooperation within the context of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) between the United States of America and each of the following seven new members of NATO: the Republic of Bulgaria, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, Romania, the Slovak Republic, and the Republic of Slovenia, hereinafter the "New Parties." I am also pleased to transmit my approval, authorization, and determination concerning the ATOMAL Agreement with respect to the New Parties, together with a copy of the memorandum of the Secretary of Defense with respect to the agreement. The ATOMAL Agreement entered into force on March 12, 1965, with respect to the United States and the other NATO members at that time. The Czech Republic, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Poland, and Spain subsequently became parties to the ATOMAL Agreement. The New Parties have signed this agreement and have indicated their willingness to be bound by it. The ATOMAL Agreement with respect to the New Parties meets the requirements of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended. While the ATOMAL Agreement continues in force with respect to the United States and the other current parties to it, it will not become effective as an agreement for cooperation authorizing the exchange of atomic information with respect to the New Parties until completion of procedures prescribed by sections 123 and 144 b. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended.

For more than 40 years, the ATOMAL Agreement has served as the framework within which NATO and the other NATO members that have become parties to this agreement have received the information that is necessary to an understanding and knowledge of and participation in the political and strategic consensus upon which the collective military capacity of the Alliance depends. This agreement permits only the transfer of atomic information, not weapons, nuclear material, or equipment. Participation

in the ATOMAL Agreement will give Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia the same standing within the Alliance with regard to nuclear matters as that of the other current parties to the ATOMAL Agreement. This is important for the cohesiveness of the Alliance and will enhance its effectiveness.

I have considered the views and recommendations of the Department of Defense and other interested agencies in reviewing the ATOMAL Agreement and have determined that its performance, including the proposed cooperation and the proposed communication of Restricted Data thereunder, with respect to the New Parties will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security. Accordingly, I have approved the ATOMAL Agreement with respect to the New Parties and authorized the Department of Defense to cooperate with the New Parties in the context of NATO upon satisfaction of the requirements of section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended.

The 60-day continuous session period provided for in section 123 begins upon receipt of this submission.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 9, 2009.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 12.

The President's News Conference

January 12, 2009

The President. Thank you. Tapper [Jake Tapper, ABC News]. We have been through a lot together. As I look through the room, I see Jake, Mike [Mike Emanuel, FOX News], Herman [Ken Herman, Cox News], Ann Compton [ABC News]. Just seemed like yesterday that I was on the campaign trail, and you were analyzing my speeches and my policies. And I see a lot of faces that travel with me around the world and to places like Afghanistan and Iraq and Africa. I see some new faces, which goes to show there's some turnover in this business.

Through it all, it's been—I have respected you. Sometimes I didn't like the stories that you wrote or reported on. Sometimes you misunderestimated me. But always the relationship, I have felt, has been professional. And I appreciate it.

I appreciate—I do appreciate working with you. My friends from—say, "What is it like to deal with the press corps?" I said, "These are just people that—trying to do the best they possibly can."

And so here at the last press conference, I'm interested in answering some of your questions. But mostly, I'm interested in saying thank you for the job.

Ben [Ben Feller, Associated Press].

National Economy/President-Elect Barack Obama

Q. Thank you for those comments, Mr. President. Here's a question. I'm wondering if you plan to ask Congress for the remaining $350 billion in bail money. And in terms of the timing, if you do that before you leave office, sir, are you motivated in part to make life a little easier for President-elect Obama?

The President. I have talked to the President-elect about this subject. And I told him that if he felt that he needed the 350 billion, I would be willing to ask for it; in other words, if he felt like it needed to happen on my watch.

The best course of action, of course, is to convince enough Members of the Senate to vote positively for the request. And, you know, that's all I can share with you, because that's all I know.

Q. So you haven't made the request yet?

The President. Well, he hasn't asked me to make the request yet. And I don't intend to make the request unless he specifically asks me to make it.

He is—you know, I've had my third conversation with him, and I genuinely mean what I say. I wish him all the very best. I have found him to be a very smart and engaging person. And that lunch the other day was interesting—to have two guys who are nearly 85, two 62-year-olders, and a 47-year-old—so kind of the classic generational statement.

And one common area, in at least the four of us—we all had different circumstances and experiences, but one thing is we've all

experienced what it means to assume the responsibility of the Presidency. And President-elect Obama is fixing to do that. And he'll get sworn in, and then they'll have the lunch and all the deal up there on Capitol Hill. And then he'll come back and go through the Inauguration, and then he'll walk in the Oval Office, and there will be a moment when the responsibilities of the President land squarely on his shoulders.

Toby [Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters]. Yes, we'll get everybody here.

Situation in the Middle East/Middle East Peace Process

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Do you believe that the Gaza conflict will have ended by the time you leave office? Do you approve of the way that Israel has conducted it? And why were you unable to achieve the peace deal that you had sought?

The President. Remind me of the three points, will you, because I'm getting——

Q. Will it end——

The President. ——I'm getting a little older.

Q. Will it end by the time you leave office? Do you approve of Israel's conduct?

The President. I hope so. I'm for a sustainable cease-fire. And a definition of a sustainable cease-fire is that Hamas stops firing rockets into Israel. And there will not be a sustainable cease-fire if they continue firing rockets. I happen to believe the choice is Hamas's to make. And we believe that the best way to ensure that there is a sustainable cease-fire is to work with Egypt to stop the smuggling of arms into the Gaza that enables Hamas to continue to fire rockets. And so countries that supply weapons to Hamas have got to stop. And the international community needs to continue to pressure them to stop providing weapons.

Hamas, obviously, if they're interested in a sustainable cease-fire, needs to stop arming. And then, of course, countries contingent to the Gaza need to work to stop the smuggling. And it's a difficult task. I mean, there's tunnels and, you know, great opportunities for people who want to continue to try to disrupt democracy to provide the weapons to do so.

The second part of your question, please, ma'am?

Q. Do you approve of the Israeli conduct in this?

The President. I think Israel has a right to defend herself. Obviously, in any of these kinds of situations, I would hope that she would continue to be mindful of innocent folks, and that they help, you know, expedite the delivery of humanitarian aid.

And third, why haven't we achieved peace?

Q. Why were you unable to——

The President. That's a good question. It's been a long time since they've had peace in the Middle East. Step one is to have a vision for what peace would look like. And in 2002, on the steps of the Rose Garden, I gave a speech about a two-state solution: two states, two democracies living side by side in peace. And we have worked hard to advance that idea. First thing is to convince all parties that the two states were necessary for peace.

And one thing that's happened is, is that most people in the Middle East now accept the two-state solution as the best way for peace. Most Palestinians want their own state, and most Israelis understand there needs to be a democracy on their border in order for there to be long-lasting peace.

The challenge, of course, has been to lay out the conditions so that a peaceful state can emerge; in other words, helping the Palestinians in the West Bank develop security forces, which we have worked hard to do over the past years. And those security forces are now becoming more efficient, and Prime Minister Fayyad is using them effectively. The challenge is to develop—help the Palestinians develop a democracy, I mean, and a vibrant economy in their—that will help lead to democracy.

And the challenge, of course, is always complicated by the fact that people are willing to murder to stop the advance of freedom. And so the Hamas, or for that matter Al Qaida, or other extremist groups, are willing to use violence to prevent free states from emerging. And that's the big challenge.

And so the answer is, will this ever happen? I think it will. And I know we have advanced the process.

Yes, Suzanne [Suzanne Malveaux, Cable News Network]. I finally got your name right, after how many years? 6 years?

War on Terror

Q. Eight years. [*Laughter*]

The President. Eight years. You used to be known as "Suz-anne." Now you're "Suz-ahn."

Q. "Suz-ahn." Thank you. [*Laughter*]

The President. I'm "Jawdg." [*Laughter*]

Q. In your 2002 State of the Union Address, you identified U.S. threats as an axis of evil: Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. Iraq is relatively calm; North Korea, no longer on the terrorist threat list. How would you define, if, in fact, there is still an axis of evil? And what is the greatest and most urgent threat when it comes to security that Barack Obama has to deal with?

The President. The most urgent threat that he'll have to deal with, and other Presidents after him will have to deal with, is an attack on our homeland. You know, I wish I could report that's not the case, but there's still an enemy out there that would like to inflict damage on America—Americans. And that will be the major threat.

North Korea is still a problem. There is a debate in the intel community about how big a problem they are. But one of my concerns is that there might be a highly enriched uranium program. And therefore, it is really important that out of the six-party talks comes a strong verification regime. In other words, in order to advance our relations with North Korea, the North Korean Government must honor the commitments it made to allow for strong verification measures to be in place, to ensure that they don't develop a highly enriched uranium program, for example.

So they're still dangerous, and Iran is still dangerous.

Yes.

The Republican Party

Q. You said in an interview earlier this weekend, one of these, I guess, exit interviews, that——

The President. This is the ultimate exit interview.

Q. ——that you think the Republican Party needs to be more inclusive. Who needs to hear that message inside the Republican Party?

The President. Yes. You see, I am concerned that, in the wake of the defeat, that the temptation will be to look inward and to say, well, here's a litmus test you must adhere to.

This party will come back. And—but the party's message has got to be that different points of view are included in the party. And take, for example, the immigration debate. That's obviously a highly contentious issue. And the problem with the outcome of the initial round of the debate was that some people said, "Well, Republicans don't like immigrants." Now, that may be fair or unfair, but that's what—that's the image that came out.

And, you know, if the image is we don't like immigrants, then there's probably somebody else out there saying, "Well, if they don't like the immigrants, they probably don't like me as well." And so my point was, is that our party has got to be compassionate and broadminded.

I remember the 1964 elections. My dad happened to be running for the United States Senate then and, you know, got landslided with the Johnson landslide in the State of Texas. But it wasn't just George Bush who got defeated; the Republican Party was pretty well decimated at the time. At least that's what they—well, I think that's how the pundits viewed it. And then '66, there was a resurgence. And the same thing can happen this time, but we just got to make sure our message is broad-gauged and compassionate: That we care about people's lives, and we've got a plan to help them improve their lives.

Jake, yes. How you doing?

The President's Record

Q. I'm good. How you doing, sir?

The President. So what have you been doing since 2000—never mind. [*Laughter*]

Q. Working my way to this chair.

The President. So are you going to be here for President Obama?

Q. I will. I will.

The President. That's a pretty cool job.

Q. It's not bad.

The President. Yes. [*Laughter*]

Q. Yours might be better.

The President. Yes—what, retirement? [*Laughter*]

Q. In the past, when you've been asked to address bad poll numbers or your unpopularity, you've said that history will judge that you did the right thing, that you thought you did the right thing. But without getting into your motives or your goals, I think a lot of people, including Republicans, including some members of your own administration, have been disappointed at the execution of some of your ideals, whether Iraq or Katrina or the economy. What would your closing message be to the American people about the execution of these goals?

The President. Well, first of all, hard things don't happen overnight, Jake. And when the history of Iraq is written, historians will analyze, for example, the decision on the surge. The situation was—looked like it was going fine, and then violence for a period of time began to throw the progress of Iraq into doubt. And rather than accepting the status quo and saying, "Oh, it's not worth it," or "The politics makes it difficult," or, you know, "The party may end up being—you know, not doing well in the elections because of the violence in Iraq," I decided to do something about it, and sent 30,000 troops in as opposed to withdrawing.

And so that part of history is certain, and the situation did change. Now, the question is, in the long run, will this democracy survive? And that's going to be the challenge for future Presidents.

In terms of the economy, look, I inherited a recession; I am ending on a recession. In the meantime there were 52 months of uninterrupted job growth. And I defended tax cuts when I campaigned. I helped implement tax cuts when I was President, and I will defend them after my Presidency as the right course of action. And there's a fundamental philosophical debate about tax cuts. Who best can spend your money, the Government or you? And I have always sided with the people on that issue.

Now, obviously, these are very difficult economic times. When people analyze the situation, there will be—this problem started before my Presidency; it obviously took place during my Presidency. The question facing a President is not when the problem started, but what did you do about it when you recognized the problem? And I readily concede I chunked aside some of my free market principles when I was told by chief economic advisers that the situation we were facing could be worse than the Great Depression.

So I've told some of my friends who said—you know, who have taken an ideological position on this issue—why did you do what you did? I said, well, if you were sitting there and heard that the depression could be greater than the Great Depression, I hope you would act too, which I did. And we've taken extraordinary measures to deal with the frozen credit markets, which have affected the economy. Credit spreads are beginning to shrink; lending is just beginning to pick up. The actions we have taken, I believe, have helped thaw the credit markets, which is the first step toward recovery.

And so, yes, look, there's plenty of critics in this business; I understand that. And I thank you for giving me a chance to defend a record that I am going to continue to defend, because I think it's a good, strong record.

Jim [Jim Axelrod, CBS News].

The President's Critics

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I'd also like to ask you about your critics.

The President. Sure. You know any? [*Laughter*]

Q. Well, a couple years ago, Charles Krauthammer, columnist and Harvard-trained psychiatrist, coined a term, "Bush derangement syndrome," to talk about your critics who disagreed with you most passionately—not just your policies, but seemed to take an animosity towards you. I'm just wondering, as you look back, why you think you engendered such passionate criticism, animosity, and do you have any message specifically to those—to that particular part of the spectrum of your critics?

The President. You know, most people I see, you know, when I'm moving around the country, for example, they're not angry. And they're not hostile people. And they—well, they say, you never meet people who disagree; that's just not true. I've met a lot of

people who don't agree with the decisions I make. But they have been civil in their discourse.

And so, I view those who get angry and yell and say bad things and, you know, all that kind of stuff, it's just a very few people in the country. I don't know why they get angry. I don't know why they get hostile. It's not the first time, however, in history that people have expressed themselves in sometimes undignified ways. I've been reading, you know, a lot about Abraham Lincoln during my Presidency, and there was some pretty harsh discord when it came to the 16th President, just like there's been harsh discord for the 30—43d President.

You know, Presidents can try to avoid hard decisions, and therefore, avoid controversy. That's just not my nature. I'm the kind of person that, you know, is willing to take on hard tasks, and in times of war people get emotional; I understand that. Never really, you know, spent that much time, frankly, worrying about the loud voices. I, of course, hear them, but they didn't affect my policy, nor did they affect how I made decisions.

You know, the President-elect Obama will find this too. He'll get in the Oval Office, and there will be a lot of people that are real critical and harsh. And he'll be disappointed at times by the tone of the rhetoric. And he's going to have to do what he thinks is right, Jim. And if you don't, then I don't see how you can live with yourself. I don't see how I can get back home in Texas and look in the mirror and be proud of what I see if I allowed the loud voices, the loud critics, to prevent me from doing what I thought was necessary to protect this country.

Mike.

President-Elect Obama/National Economy

Q. Mr. President, thank you very much. Since your philosophy is so different from President-elect Obama's, what concerns you the most about what he may attempt to do?

The President. You know, Michael, I'm not going to speculate about what he's going to do. It's going to be—you know, he's going to get in the Oval Office, he's going to analyze each situation, and he's going to make the decisions that he think is necessary.

And the other thing is, when I get out of here, I'm getting off the stage. I believe there ought to be, you know, one person in the klieg lights at a time. And I've had my time in the klieg lights. You know, I'm confident, you know, you'll catch me opining on occasion, but I wish him all the best.

And people say, "Oh, you just—that's just a throwaway line." No, it's not a throwaway line. The stakes are high. There is an enemy that still is out there. You know, people can maybe try to write that off as, you know, he's trying to set something up. I'm telling you there's an enemy that would like to attack America—Americans again. There just is. That's the reality of the world. And I wish him all the very best.

And of course, he's going to have his hands full with the economy. I understand. It's tough for a lot of working people out there. People are concerned about their economic future. You know, one of the very difficult parts of the decision I made on the financial crisis was to use hard-working people's money to help prevent there to be a crisis, and in so doing, some of that money went into Wall Street firms that caused the crisis in the first place. I wasn't kidding when I said Wall Street got drunk, and we got the hangover. And—but nevertheless, President-elect Obama will find the problems and the situations surrounding problems sometimes cause people to have to make decisions that they, you know, weren't initially comfortable with. And there was such a decision when it came to Wall Street.

I mean, I had a lot of people—when I went out to Midland that time—say, "What the heck are you doing, boy? Those people up East caused the problem." I said, "I know, but if we hadn't worked to fix the problem, your situation would be worse." And anyway, I really do wish him all the best.

Sheryl [Sheryl Gay Stolberg, New York Times].

Presidential Pardons

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, in recent days, there's been a fair amount of discussion in legal circles about whether or not you might give preemptive

pardons, pardons in advance, to officials of your administration who engaged in anything from harsh interrogation tactics to perhaps dismissing U.S. Attorneys. And I'd like to know, have you given any consideration to this? And are you planning on it?

The President. I won't be discussing pardons here at this press conference.

Q. Can I have a follow up?

The President. Would you like to ask another question?

Q. Yes, I would, sir. Thank you. Four years ago——

The President. That's the spirit, isn't it? [*Laughter*]

Q. I appreciate that.

The President. Thank you. [*Laughter*]

Reflections on the President's Time in Office

Q. Four years ago, you were asked if you had made any mistakes.

The President. Yes.

Q. And I'm not trying to play "gotcha," but I wonder, when you look back over the long arc of your Presidency, do you think, in retrospect, that you have made any mistakes? And if so, what is the single biggest mistake that you may have made?

The President. Gotcha. Hey, look, I have often said that history will look back and determine that which could have been done better, or, you know, mistakes I made. Clearly, putting a "Mission Accomplished" on a aircraft carrier was a mistake. It sent the wrong message. We were trying to say something differently, but nevertheless, it conveyed a different message. Obviously, some of my rhetoric has been a mistake.

I've thought long and hard about Katrina—you know, could I have done something differently, like land Air Force One either in New Orleans or Baton Rouge. The problem with that and—is that law enforcement would have been pulled away from the mission. And then your questions, I suspect, would have been, "How could you possibly have flown Air Force One into Baton Rouge, and police officers that were needed to expedite traffic out of New Orleans were taken off the task to look after you?"

I believe that running the Social Security idea right after the '04 elections was a mistake. I should have argued for immigration reform. And the reason why is, is that—you know, one of the lessons I learned as Governor of Texas, by the way, is legislative branches tend to be risk-adverse. In other words, sometimes legislatures have the tendency to ask, "Why should I take on a hard task when a crisis is not imminent?" And the crisis was not imminent for Social Security, as far as many Members of Congress was concerned.

As an aside, one thing I proved is that you can actually campaign on the issue and get elected. In other words, I don't believe talking about Social Security is the third rail of American politics. I, matter of fact, think that in the future, not talking about how you intend to fix Social Security is going to be the third rail of American politics.

And the—one thing about the Presidency is that you can make—only make decisions, you know, on the information at hand. You don't get to have information after you've made the decision. That's not the way it works. And you stand by your decisions, and you do your best to explain why you made the decisions you made.

There have been disappointments. Abu Ghraib, obviously, was a huge disappointment during the Presidency. Not having weapons of mass destruction was a significant disappointment. I don't know if you want to call those mistakes or not, but they were—things didn't go according to plan, let's put it that way.

And anyway, I think historians will look back, and they'll be able to have a better look at mistakes after some time has passed. I—along Jake's question, there is no such thing as short-term history. I don't think you can possibly get the full breadth of an administration until time has passed. Where does a President's—did a President's decisions have the impact that he thought they would, or he thought they would over time? Or how did this President compare to future Presidents, given a set of circumstances that may be similar or not similar? I mean, there's—it's just impossible to do. And I'm comfortable with that.

Yes, Mike [Michael Abramowitz, Washington Post].

America's Standing in the World

Q. One of the major objectives that the incoming administration has talked frequently about is restoring America's moral standing in the world. And many of the allies of the new President—and I believe that the President-elect himself has talked about—how damage that Gitmo, that harsh interrogation tactics that they consider torture, how going to war in Iraq without a U.N. mandate have damaged America's moral standing in the world.

The President. Yes.

Q. I'm wondering, basically, what is your reaction to that? Do you think that is that something that America—that the next President needs to worry about?

The President. I strongly disagree with the assessment that our moral standing has been damaged. It may be damaged amongst some of the elite, but people still understand America stands for freedom, that America is a country that provides such great hope.

You go to Africa, you ask Africans about Americans' generosity and compassion; go to India, and ask about, you know, America's—their view of America; go to China and ask. Now, if—no question, parts of Europe have said that we shouldn't have gone to war in Iraq without a mandate, but those are a few countries. Most countries in Europe listened to what 1441 said, which is disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences.

Most people take those words seriously. Now, some countries didn't, and even though they might have voted for the resolution. I disagree with this assessment that, you know, people view America in a dim light. I just don't agree with that. Now, I understand that Gitmo has created controversies. But when it came time for those countries that were criticizing America to take some of those detainees, they weren't willing to help out. And so, you know, I just disagree with the assessment, Mike.

I'll remind—listen, I tell people, yes, you can try to be popular. In certain quarters in Europe, you can be popular by blaming every Middle Eastern problem on Israel, or you can be popular by joining the International Criminal Court. I guess I could have been popular by accepting Kyoto, which I felt was a flawed treaty and proposed something different and more constructive.

And in terms of the decisions that I had made to protect the homeland, I wouldn't worry about popularity. What I would worry about is the Constitution of the United States and putting plans in place that makes it easier to find out what the enemy is thinking, because all these debates will matter not if there's another attack on the homeland. The question won't be, you know, were you critical of this plan or not. The question is going to be, why didn't you do something?

Do you remember what it was like right after September the 11th around here? In press conferences and opinion pieces and in stories—that sometimes were news stories and sometimes opinion pieces—people were saying, "How come they didn't see it? How come they didn't connect the dots?" Do you remember what the environment was like in Washington? I do. When people were hauled up in front of Congress, and Members of Congress were asking questions about, "How come you didn't know this, that, or the other?" And then we start putting policy in place—legal policy in place to connect the dots, and all of a sudden people were saying, "How come you're connecting the dots?"

And so, Mike, I've heard all that. I've heard all that. My view is, is that most people around the world, they respect America. And some of them doesn't like me, I understand that, some of the writers and the, you know, opiners and all that. That's fine; that's part of the deal. But I'm more concerned about the country and our—how people view the United States. They view us as strong, compassionate people who care deeply about the universality of freedom.

Roger [Roger Runningen, Bloomberg News].

Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP)/ National Economy

Q. Thank you. Mr. President, you spoke a moment ago about using taxpayers' money for the TARP program.

The President. Yes, I did.

Q. The first $350 billion is out the door; it's been spent. Are you satisfied that it's been spent wisely? And for the second 350 that's under consideration, do you think—are you

supportive of Congress putting some restrictions on it?

The President. I'm supportive of the President-elect working out a plan with Congress that best suits him—and Congress. That's what he's going to have to do. He's going to have to go up there, and he's going to have to make his case as to why the 350 [billion] ° is necessary. And he knows that. This is nothing new.

And in terms of the first 350 [billion], ° I am pleased with this aspect of the expenditure, and that is that the financial markets are beginning to thaw. In the fall, I was concerned that the credit freeze would cause us to be headed toward a depression greater than the Great Depression. That's what I was told, if we didn't move. And so therefore, we have moved aggressively.

And by the way, it just wasn't with the TARP. If you think about AIG, Fannie and Freddie, a lot of the decisions that were made in this administration are very aggressive decisions, all aiming at preventing the financial system from cratering.

President-Elect Obama/The Presidency

Q. Mr. President, you spoke of the moment that the responsibility of the office would hit Barack Obama. The world is a far different place than it was when it hit you. When do you think he's going to feel the full impact? And what, if anything, have you and the other Presidents shared with him about the effects of the sometimes isolation, the so-called bubble of the office?

The President. Yes, that's a great question. He will feel the effects the minute he walks in the Oval Office. At least, that's when I felt. I don't know when he's going—he may feel it the minute he's—gets sworn in. And the minute I got sworn in, I started thinking about the speech. [*Laughter*] And so—but he's a better speechmaker than me, so he'll be able to—I don't know how he's going to feel. All I know is he's going to feel it. There will be a moment when he feels it.

I have never felt isolated, and I don't think he will. One reason he won't feel isolated is because he's got a fabulous family, and he cares a lot about his family. That's evident from my discussions with him. He'll be—he's a 45-second commute away from a great wife and two little girls that love him dearly.

I believe this—the phrase "burdens of the office" is overstated. You know, it's kind of like, why me? Oh, the burdens, you know. Why did the financial collapse have to happen on my watch? It's just—it's pathetic, isn't it, self-pity? And I don't believe that President-elect Obama will be full of self-pity. He will find—you know, your—the people that don't like you, the critics, they're pretty predictable. Sometimes the biggest disappointments will come from your so-called friends. And there will be disappointments, I promise you. He'll be disappointed. On the other hand, the job is so exciting and so profound that the disappointments are—will be clearly, you know, a minor irritant compared to the——

Q. So it was never the "loneliest office in the world" for you?

The President. No, not for me. We had a—people—we—I had a fabulous team around me of highly dedicated, smart, capable people, and we had fun. I tell people that, you know, some days happy, some days not so happy; every day has been joyous. And people, they say, "I just don't believe it to be the case." Well, it is the case. Even in the darkest moments of Iraq, you know, there was—and every day when I was reading the reports about soldiers losing their lives, no question, there was a lot of emotion. But also there was times where we could be light-hearted and support each other.

And I built a team of really capable people who were there not to serve me or there to serve the Republicans, they were there to serve the country. And President-elect Obama will find, as he makes these tough calls and tough decisions, that he'll be supported by a lot of really good people that care about the country as well.

John [John McKinnon, Wall Street Journal].

Trade

Q. You've talked a lot about your concerns over the rise of protectionism in the current——

The President. Yes.

° White House correction.

Q. ——economic environment. What do you think the future holds for that? Do you think the trend is a good one or a bad one?

The President. I hope the trend is bad against protectionism. A disappointment—not a mistake, but a disappointment—was not getting the three trade bills out of Congress on Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. That was a disappointment. I actually thought we had a shot at one time, and then I was disappointed that they didn't move out of the House.

And I am concerned about protectionism. In tough economic times, the temptation is to say, well, let's just throw up barriers and protect our own and not compete. That was the sentiment, by the way, that was in place during decent economic times. After all, we got CAFTA out of the Congress by one vote. And it would be a huge mistake if we become a protectionist nation.

And that might be a good thing for the Bush Center to do at SMU, is to remind people about the benefits of free and fair trade: benefits for our own workers, benefits for workers overseas, and benefits when it comes to promoting development and helping lift people out of poverty, in particularly, third world countries. The best way to enhance economic growth in a third world country and to give people a chance to realize a better future is through trade. It's been proven; it's a fact. And I'm hopeful that the country doesn't slip into protectionist policy.

April [April Ryan, American Urban Radio Networks], yes, ma'am.

Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina/Race Relations in America

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Yes. You were sound asleep back there, so I decided—[*laughter*]——

Q. No, I wasn't. There was a whole clear row before me. I thought you were going to go there first. But either way, thanks for the surprise.

Mr. President, on New Orleans, you basically talked about a moment ago about the photo opportunity. But let's talk about what you could have done to change the situation for the city of New Orleans to be further along in reconstruction than where it is now. And also, when you came—or began to run for the Oval Office about 9 years ago or so, the James Byrd dragging death was residue on your campaign. And now at this time, 2009, we have the first black President. Could you tell us what you have seen on the issues of race, as you see it from the Oval Office?

The President. Sure, thanks. First of all, we did get the $121 billion, more or less, passed, and it's now being spent. Secondly, the school system is improving dramatically. Thirdly, people are beginning to move back into homes. This storm was a devastating storm, April, that required a lot of energy, a lot of focus, and a lot of resources to get New Orleans up and running.

And has the reconstruction been perfect? No. Have things happened fairly quickly? Absolutely. And is there more to be done? You bet there is.

Q. What more needs to be done?

The President. Well, more people need to get in their houses. More people need to have their own home there. But the systems are in place to continue the reconstruction of New Orleans.

People said, well, the Federal response was slow. Don't tell me the Federal response was slow when there was 30,000 people pulled off roofs right after the storm passed. I remember going to see those helicopter drivers, Coast Guard drivers, to thank them for their courageous efforts to rescue people off roofs. Thirty thousand people were pulled off roofs right after the storm moved through. That's a pretty quick response.

Could things have been done better? Absolutely. Absolutely. But when I hear people say, the Federal response was slow, then what are they going to say to those chopper drivers or the 30,000 that got pulled off the roofs?

The other part of the—look, I was affected by TV after the elections, when I saw people saying, "I never thought I would see the day that a black person would be elected President." And a lot of the people had tears streaming down their cheeks when they said it. And so I am—I consider myself fortunate to have a front-row seat on what is going to

be an historic moment for the country. President-elect Obama's election does speak volumes about how far this country has come when it comes to racial relations. But there's still work to do. There's always going to be work to do to deal with people's hearts.

And so I'm looking forward to it, really am. I think it's going to be an amazing moment.

Michael Allen [Politico]. Yes, Michael Allen.

Post-Presidency Agenda

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Would be you.

Q. Mr. President, often Presidents go—leave here; they say they're going to decompress, and then pretty soon they're right back in their office. I wonder how quickly you think you're going to be back at it, whether it's writing your book, whether it's speaking, whether it's traveling, whether it's overseas——

The President. You know, Mike, I don't know. Probably the next day. I'm a type A personality, you know. I just can't envision myself, you know, the big straw hat and Hawaiian shirt sitting on some beach. [*Laughter*]

Q. No one else can either.

The President. So—[*laughter*]. Particularly, since I quit drinking. Anyway, so I predict to you that—first of all, I'm not sure what to expect. For the last 8 years, I have had a national security briefing every day but Sunday. And when you get a national security briefing, it is a reminder of the responsibilities of the job. It's just a daily reminder about what may or may not happen.

The interesting thing about this job, by the way, is it's one thing to deal with the expected, what you anticipate; the real challenge is to be in a position to deal with the unexpected. And that's why those intel briefings are so important, because there is an awareness in the briefings by the analyst to try to help anticipate problems. And of course, you hope they don't arise, but you better be prepared when they do.

And that in itself creates a—you know, gets your attention, when you start thinking about what could happen. And the key there, of course, is that—to take these different analyses seriously, and then have a structure so that your team will be in a position to analyze and then to lay out potential avenues for the President—from which the President can choose.

I say all that because that's—this has been—this notion about being briefed and thinking about this issue or that issue has been just a part of my life for 8 years. People say, well, there you are in Crawford on vacation. You never escape the Presidency. It travels with you everywhere you go. And there's not a moment where you don't think about being President, unless you're riding mountain bikes as hard as you possibly can, trying to forget for the moment.

And so I wake up in Crawford Tuesday morning—I mean, Wednesday morning, and I suspect I'll make Laura coffee and go get it for her. And it's going to be a different feeling. And I can't—it's kind of like—I'll report back after I feel it.

Last question. Ann, since you've been there from day one.

The Atmosphere in Washington, DC/ Cooperation With Congress

Q. Well, thank you, and I wanted to ask you about day one. You arrived here wanting to be a uniter, not a divider. Do you think Barack Obama can be a uniter, not a divider? Or is, with the challenges for any President and the unpopular decisions, is it impossible for any President to be uniter, not a divider?

The President. I hope the tone is different for him than it has been for me. I am disappointed by the tone in Washington, DC. I have tried to do my part by not engaging in the name-calling and, by the way, needless name-calling. I have worked to be respectful of my opponents on different issues.

There—we did find some good common ground on a variety of issues: No Child Left Behind, Medicare prescription drugs, PEPFAR, in the end, the funding for troops in Iraq. We—tax cuts, to a certain extent, got some bipartisan votes on them. There had been areas where we were able to work together. It's just the rhetoric got out of control at times——

Q. Why?

The President. I don't know why. You need to ask those who used the words they used. As I say, it's not the first time it's ever happened, as I think I answered that to Jim there. It's happened throughout our history. And I would hope that, frankly, for the sake of the system itself, that if people disagree with the President-elect Obama, they treat him with respect. I worry about people looking at our system and saying, "Why would I want to go up there and work in that kind of environment?"

And so I wish him all the best. And no question, he'll be—there will be critics. And there should be. We all should welcome criticism on different policy; it's the great thing about our democracy; people have a chance to express themselves. I just hope the tone is respectful. He deserves it, and so does the country.

It has been a honor to work with you. I meant what I said when I first got up here. I wish you all the very best. I wish you and your families all the best. God bless you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 9:17 a.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Presidents Jimmy Carter, George H.W. Bush, and William J. Clinton; Prime Minister Salam Fayyad of the Palestinian Authority; and Michelle Obama, wife, and Malia and Natasha "Sasha" Obama, daughters, of President-elect Barack Obama.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Treasury Department Plans Concerning Emergency Economic Stabilization

January 12, 2009

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 115(a)(3) of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–343) (the "Act"), I hereby transmit a report detailing the plan of the Secretary of the Treasury to exercise the authority under the Act.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 12, 2009.

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting

January 13, 2009

I want to thank an extraordinary group of American citizens who have served our country as members of my Cabinet. Everybody around this table here could have taken the easy road and stayed home and worried about their own comforts, but instead they answered the call to service. And the country is lucky to have folks like this step up and serve.

I have thanked them here at my last Cabinet meeting not only for their service but for helping President-elect Obama transition. And we wish the President-elect and his team all the very best. It is our genuine wish that they do well.

We also reviewed our record, and this administration has had a good, solid record. And I'm very proud of it. I tell people I leave town with a great sense of accomplishment and my head held high. We reformed education, and test scores for minority students are up. We reformed Medicare, and seniors have now got prescription drug coverage. We lowered taxes for everybody who pays taxes. We transformed our military to make it be able to deal more effectively with the threats of the 21st century. And the Secretary transformed the State Department so it can deal with the threats of the 21st century as well.

We changed how we deliver aid around the world to—through the Millennium Challenge Account. I put good judges on the bench. Drug use for teenagers is down in America by about 25 percent. The air is cleaner. The water is purer. The armies of compassion are more invigorated than ever before. Free trade agreements have been signed.

We dealt with an economic meltdown with strong action so that our successor has a better chance of dealing with the economic fallout from the credit crisis.

Most of all, we protected this country from harm. And we did so by providing tools and—for our professionals as well as asking our military to do hard work, which they have done time and time again. Concurrent with that, we've promoted the freedom agenda.

Fifty million people are now free in Afghanistan and Iraq because of action taken by the United States and our coalition.

But when I talk about the freedom agenda, I talk about more than just freedom from tyranny. I talk about freedom from hunger—and we've had a substantial aid program to help people who are hungry—and freedom from disease. I'm very proud of the efforts out of the State Department to—on PEPFAR, which is the AIDS initiative on the continent of Africa, as well as our malaria initiative.

All in all, this administration has relied upon the great compassion of the American people, the sacrifice of those who wear the uniform. And so we leave town honored to have served and proud of the job we have done. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:14 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico

January 13, 2009

President Bush. *Bienvenido a mi amigo.* Mr. President, welcome.

President Calderon. Thank you.

President Bush. It has been a true pleasure to work with President Calderon. He's a man of conviction, he is a man of principle, and he is a man who's willing to take on tough challenges. I have appreciated every meeting I've had with him.

I want to take—talk about two subjects quickly. One, Americans are concerned about the battle that's taking place in Mexico, and I want our fellow citizens to understand that this man understands the responsibilities of government to provide security; that he will not allow his country, or parts of his country, to be taken over by narcotraffickers; and that the United States of America wants to share and help deal with the issue on both sides of the border. The less drugs we use, the less pressure there will be in Mexico. We have got responsibilities to help prevent guns from going from the United States into Mexico.

And so, Mr. President, you and I have laid the foundation for a constructive, mutual engagement on this issue.

And secondly, I want to thank you for your steadfast support of trade. I'm a big, strong believer in NAFTA. NAFTA has been good for the United States of America, and NAFTA has been good for Mexico. And I want to thank you for that.

And so, Mr. President, it has been a pleasure to work with you. Thank you for your friendship.

President Calderon. Thank you.

President Bush. Yes. *Y hora en el espanol.*

President Calderon. *Como no.*

[*At this point, President Calderon made remarks in Spanish. He then spoke in English, as follows.*]

President Calderon. We have a strong commitment in order to fight and defeat the criminals in Mexico, and we will do so. And we have a strong commitment with the rule of law, enforcement of the law in our country.

[*President Calderon continued in Spanish. He then concluded in English, as follows.*]

President Calderon. Thank you, President Bush——

President Bush. Yes, sir.

President Calderon. ——and good luck in the future.

President Bush. Thank you, sir. Thank you.

White House Staff Member. Okay, guys, thank you——

President Bush. Hold on. *Un momento, un momento.*

President Calderon. Wait. Hold on.

[*An interpreter then provided the translation of President Calderon's previously delivered remarks.*]

Interpreter. Good afternoon, friends. I wanted to say that I came here to Washington, DC, to wish President Bush the very best. I want to wish him and his family all the best in this new phase. And I want to thank him especially for the friendship that he has shown me over the last 2 years in facing our common challenges together——

President Calderon. And his support.

Interpreter. ——and for his support. [*Laughter*]

With regard to the issues that President Bush has raised, I want to say that our administration has made a crucial decision in this regard. We are going to be promoting law; we are going to be promoting order in our country. We will be promoting the rule of law for all Mexicans.

We have worked jointly in this regard. We have worked together on the drug-trafficking combat front. We have worked together to combat organized crime.

This is not an isolated problem for any country. This is a common problem that affects us both. And in order to do so, we have worked together, and we have made this resolution.

We are committed to fighting criminals and to overcoming them once and for all. And the rule of law is the one thing that I want to stress we are going to promote, no matter what, in our country.

I agree with what the President has said with regard to the North America Free Trade Agreement. It has proved to be very useful, both for the United States and for Mexico. In that regard, millions of jobs were created here in the United States. Mexico is the second-largest purchaser of U.S. goods. We buy, in fact, twice as many U.S. products as the People's Republic of China. Two million jobs based on exports were created in Mexico——

President Calderon. No, in the United States.

Interpreter. ——in the United States, excuse me, as a result of NAFTA. [*Laughter*] And yesterday, I was discussing with President-elect Obama the fact that we are willing to continue working on future additions of a way to continue to build on the achievements that NAFTA has created—benefits, issues of concern to both of our citizens. I understand that there are issues of concern to Mexicans, as well as to U.S. citizens, on the issue of the environment and on labor.

I want to wish the very best to President Bush, to his family, as well as to the United States. The U.S. will continue to solve its problems with success, I have no doubt about that. And we in Mexico can only wish the very best for this country, a great country, and for its citizens in overcoming the economic crisis it is now facing, overcoming other problems, as well as drug consumption, because any problems arising in the United States in some way will also affect Mexican citizens as well.

And so we can only wish you the very best in every area. Thank you.

President Calderon. Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you, thank you. *Adios*.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:58 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, President Calderon referred to President-elect Barack Obama. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom

January 13, 2009

The President. Good afternoon to everybody, and thank you all for coming. We have assembled quite a distinguished crowd to honor three good friends: President Uribe, Prime Minister Howard, and Prime Minister Blair. Laura and I welcome you to the White House.

You'll always be welcomed in our country. And we hope to have you come down and visit us in Texas. As you probably have heard, we're changing addresses here—[*laughter*]—in a little less than 7 days.

We're delighted to have a lot of distinguished guests, people who have worked with you throughout your time in office; members of your family who are here, we're really glad you've come.

I want to thank the Vice President, members of the Cabinet, and Members of the Congress who have joined us as well. We offer a special welcome to those who are personal friends of the honorees. I know they're as delighted to have you here as I am.

In a few moments the military aide will read the citations for the Presidential Medal of Freedom. The medal is America's highest civil award. It is given in recognition of exemplary achievement and to convey the utmost

esteem of the people and the President of the United States.

In these 8 years, I have presented the Medal of Freedom to some of our most eminent citizens. On occasion, I have also had the honor of presenting it to citizens of other lands who inspired particular admiration in the United States and provided courageous leadership to our world. Among these recipients have been Vaclav Havel, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Nelson Mandela, and the late Pope John Paul II.

This afternoon I am pleased to award the Medal of Freedom to three extraordinary leaders. We honor a sitting President and two former vice—Prime Ministers, each one of them a true friend of the United States who met historic challenges with great tenacity, and who provides a lasting example of statesmanship at home and abroad.

The first day I met Tony Blair, almost exactly 8 years ago, he was in his second term as Prime Minister, and I was just starting out. After our first meeting, a reporter asked if we'd found anything in common, and I jokingly replied that we both used Colgate toothpaste. [*Laughter*]

The truth is I did feel a close connection to Tony Blair. As I said after the first meeting, I knew that when either of us gets in a bind, there will be a friend on the other end of the phone. My friend was there, indeed, after America was attacked on September the 11th, 2001. And it just wasn't on the phone line. When I stood in the House Chamber to ask the civilized world to rally to freedom's cause, there in the gallery was the staunch friend Prime Minister Tony Blair.

He was there in a moment of trial to affirm the special relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom. And he was there to show America, and all nations, that he understood the stakes in the war on terror. As he said: "Just as the terrorist seeks to divide humanity in hate, so we have to unify it around an idea. And that idea is liberty." Under Tony Blair's leadership, the might and the moral authority of Great Britain have been applied to the war on terror from the first day. Our nations have worked proudly together to destroy terrorist havens, liberate millions, and help rising democracies to serve the aspirations of their people.

Tony Blair's entire career is defined by his devotion to democratic values and human dignity. At his very center, this man believes in freedom: freedom from oppression, freedom from hunger, freedom from disease, and freedom from fear and despair. In the House of Commons, as the longest serving Labour Prime Minister in history, he fought to lift up his nation's communities and better the lives of all its people. He helped turn generations of violence in Northern Ireland into years of peace. He drew the attention and conscience of the world to the suffering in Africa, and he continues to serve the cause of peace and democracy as the Quartet Envoy to the Middle East.

Out of office but still in public life, Tony Blair remains on the world stage as a man of high intelligence and insight, and above all, as a man of faith and idealism and integrity. The former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom will stand tall in history. And today the United States of America proudly honors its gallant friend Tony Blair.

John Howard of Australia has spent a lot of years in politics. He's won some, and he's lost a few. There was even a time, two decades ago, when he thought his days of political leadership might be over. A comeback, he said, would be like "Lazarus with a triple bypass." [*Laughter*] The man has got an unusual way of speaking. [*Laughter*]

With his plain-spoken style and unpretentious manner, John Howard did make a comeback. He rose to his nation's highest elected office, won four straight elections, and served longer than all other Australian Prime Ministers but one. And all the while, John Howard retained his close connection with the people of his country. His time in office was marked by great national confidence and prosperity and rising global influence. He won the respect of leaders around the world for his commitment to free markets, cooperation, and the peaceful resolution of differences. He was a faithful steward of Australia's alliances and a sturdy friend in a time of need.

At an event here in Washington, he reflected on the many tests that our two countries faced together in the 20th century. He

spoke with feeling about our shared values, as well as our obligation to defend them, and "if necessary fight for them, and be ready to repel those who would seek to take [our] freedoms away."

As it happens, John Howard spoke those words on Monday, September the 10th, 2001, and in all that followed, he proved true to his convictions. He always has been brave in the defense of freedom. In these 7 years, both our countries have lost innocent civilians and suffered casualties on the field of battle. But this man, who saw the burning Pentagon on September the 11th, and who confronted—comforted the survivors of Bali, never wavered in his commitment to overcoming this great danger to civilization. He never wavered in his support for liberty, and free institutions, and the rule of law as the true and hopeful alternatives to ideologies of violence and repression. He's a man of honesty and moral clarity. He can make a decision, he can defend it, and he stands his ground. That's why I called him a man of steel.

In the character of John Winston Howard we see that fine Australian spirit of "standing by your mates." Our two countries, though half a world apart, have long enjoyed an easy and natural fellowship. And the 25th Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia stands for all that Americans like and admire most about this wonderful country.

So, Mr. Prime Minister, our friend, welcome to the White House and congratulations.

National leaders sometimes take office without fully knowing all the tests that await them. But when Alvaro Uribe became the President of Colombia, the challenges were in full view. He knew exactly what he was getting into.

For more than a generation, good and decent people across that country had lived at the mercy of brutal drug cartels and illegal, armed groups. A contagion of terrorist violence and killings and kidnappings had shaken the political system and caused many Colombians to despair for their nation's future. Early in this decade, the Republic of Colombia was near the point of being, at best, a failed state, or at worst, a narco-state. In those conditions, it took more than ambition and ideals to run for political office; it required immense personal courage and strength of character.

As a Presidential candidate in 2002, Alvaro Uribe pledged to his people greater security, a healthier democracy, and a better chance for prosperous lives. He was elected on a theme that expressed perfectly what the Colombian people desired in a President: "Strong hand and big heart."

President Uribe's leadership has been resolute and uncompromising. Today in Colombia, homicides are down 40 percent, kidnapings are down more than 80 percent, terror attacks are down by more than 75 percent. The forces of violence are on the defensive, and the people are reclaiming their country.

President Uribe's fellow citizens know him as someone who speaks forthrightly and follows through on his commitments. With his lifelong interest in public policy, he has a phenomenal grasp of the details of governing. At the same time, he has formed a powerful bond with his people. They've met their President in townhalls across the country. They've seen him deliver results. They like him, and they trust him. And they have made him the first Colombian leader in the modern era to win reelection.

Lately, I've been asked to reflect on the most memorable events of my Presidency. Among those is a phone call I received several months ago from President Uribe. He called to say that a group of hostages, including three Americans, that had been held in captivity for 5 years, had been rescued and were alive and safe and sound. It was a joyful moment, Mr. President. And it was a credit to your leadership.

For President Uribe, the great demands of office continue. Today the United States honors all Colombians by honoring the man they have chosen to lead them. By refusing to allow the land he loves to be destroyed by an enemy within, by proving that terror can be opposed and defeated, President Uribe has reawakened the hopes of his countrymen and shown a model of leadership to a watching world. Colombia remains a nation with challenges. But the future will always be bright in a country that produces such men as President Alvaro Uribe.

Congratulations, *mi amigo*.

Each of these gentlemen we honor today has his own style and personality, and each has amassed distinctions and achievements that belong to him alone. Yet all of them have shown a firm adherence to the principles of freedom and democratic values and a willingness to face problems squarely instead of passing them on to others. They're the sort of guys who look you in the eye and tell you the truth and keep their word. In lengthy service they proved to be leaders of character and fortitude. They are warm friends of the United States of America. The opportunity to know them and work with them has been among the great satisfactions of my time as President. I respect them, and I admire them.

And now I ask the military aide to read the citations, and it will be my honor to present the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Tony Blair, John Howard, Alvaro Uribe.

[*Lt. Cmdr. Clay Beers, USN, Navy Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals.*]

The President. In honor of these distinguished gentlemen, Laura and I invite you to stay for a reception in the State Dining Room. Please enjoy yourselves, and thank you for joining us here at the White House.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:07 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic; President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia; former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; and Marc Gonsalves, Thomas Howes, and Keith Stansell, former hostages held by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on the Situation in Cuba

January 13, 2009

As much of the world celebrates the dawning of a new year, Cuba marks 50 years of one of the cruelest dictatorships this hemisphere has witnessed.

To those who yearn for liberty, all is not lost. The world has witnessed other instances of dictatorship, but has ultimately seen those regimes fall and formerly enslaved countries embrace their birthright of freedom. One day, the people of Cuba will enjoy this same blessing.

This message of hope is directed especially to those who have made pleas for freedom only to be silenced by tyranny and oppression—individuals like Oscar Elias Biscet, Luis Enrique Ferrer, Ricardo Gonzalez, Jose Luis Garcia Paneque, and many others. It is equally intended for the families of such prisoners, who dearly miss their loved ones and continue to suffer oppression at the hands of the regime. The American people admire the courage of these families and the emerging civil society movement, reflected in the existence of groups like the *Damas de Blanco*, who stand up for the fundamental human rights bestowed by our Creator.

As long as there are people who fight for liberty, the United States will stand with them and speak out for those whose voices have been temporarily silenced. All Cubans have the right to be treated with dignity, so that they can rise as high as their talents and hard work will take them. This is the standard my administration and past administrations—regardless of political affiliation—have expected from the Cuban Government as the condition for improved relations.

My administration has continually challenged the Cuban Government to bring genuine political and economic changes and improve human rights and has made it clear that the United States stands prepared to respond to any request for assistance from a Cuba that transitions to democracy. The Castro regime's response to our offers has been continued repression of the Cuban people.

Throughout my Presidency, the plight of Cuba has been close to my heart. My sincere wish has been for the proud people of Cuba to take their rightful place in the community of democratic, freedom-loving nations.

Laura and I send our Cuban *hermanos y hermanas* a message of peace and love. May God bless you and continue to give you the faith and courage to fight for the day when the light of liberty will shine on the people of Cuba.

Proclamation 8338—Religious Freedom Day, 2009

January 13, 2009

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Religious freedom is the foundation of a healthy and hopeful society. On Religious Freedom Day, we recognize the importance of the 1786 passage of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom. We also celebrate the first liberties enshrined in our Constitution's Bill of Rights, which guarantee the free exercise of religion for all Americans and prohibit an establishment of religion.

Our Nation was founded by people seeking haven from religious persecution, and the religious liberty they found here remains one of this land's greatest blessings. As Americans, we believe that all people have inherent dignity and worth. Though we may profess different creeds and worship in different manners and places, we respect each other's humanity and expression of faith. People with diverse views can practice their faiths here while living together in peace and harmony, carrying on our Nation's noble tradition of religious freedom.

The United States also stands with religious dissidents and believers from around the globe who practice their faith peacefully. Freedom is not a grant of government or a right for Americans alone; it is the birthright of every man, woman, and child throughout the world. No human freedom is more fundamental than the right to worship in accordance with one's conscience.

Religious Freedom Day is an opportunity to celebrate our legacy of religious liberty, foster a culture of tolerance and peace, and renew commitments to ensure that every person on Earth can enjoy these basic human rights.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 16, 2009, as Religious Freedom Day. I call on all Americans to reflect on the great blessing of religious liberty, endeavor to preserve this freedom for future generations, and commemorate this day with appropriate events and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:15 a.m., January 14, 2009]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on January 15.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom at the Department of State

January 15, 2009

Thank you all. I got 5 days left; be seated. [*Laughter*]

Madam Secretary, thank you very much for your kind introduction, and thank you for these beautiful reminders of how fantastic it's been to work with you.

By the way, these are going to be at Southern Methodist University—[*laughter*]—proudly displayed at the Presidential Center I will build to remind our country of the timeless values of freedom and liberty. And I am honored to take them back to Texas. I'm honored to take my wife back to Texas too. [*Laughter*]

The award you gave Laura, Condi, is well deserved in my unobjective opinion. She has been awesome First Lady. And I'm proud to have been here in Washington. And you've been an awesome friend and a great Secretary of State.

You know, people—I tell people all the time, they ask me about Condi, and I say, "She's like my sister." We've been through a lot together. [*Laughter*] And one of the things about her is that she has never lost her great optimism. She's plenty tough when she needed to be tough; she's plenty charming when she needs to be charming. But during the darkest of days, she always had a sense of optimism and constantly reminded me of what is possible and what will happen if we don't lose confidence in fundamental

truths. History will say that Condi Rice was one of the great Secretaries of State our country has ever had.

And I thank my friend John Negroponte. I call him "Ponte"—you better call him—[*laughter*]—Mr. Secretary. He has done a lot of hard work on behalf of the country, and he has really done it well—a variety of jobs that have required skill and dedication and courage, and each job he's handled with a lot of class, he really has.

I want to thank the Ambassadors who have joined us. Thanks for coming. Appreciate your service to your countries. And I want to thank all those who work here, veterans and rookies alike. [*Laughter*] This is a fabulous Department and a vital part of making sure this country remains secure in the long run. And it's been a joy to work with you.

Tonight I'm going to give a farewell address to the American people. It's going to be a short one. [*Laughter*] But it's got a lot of meaning to it, as far as I'm concerned. I'm going to urge our Nation to continue to engage the world with confidence, confidence in the transformative power of freedom and liberty.

These are the ideals that gave birth to our own Nation, these universal ideals gave birth to America. And over the past 8 years, together we have worked to advance these ideals. And every member of this Department can be proud of the results.

In the Middle East, we stood with dissidents and young democracies. Sometimes that was not easy to do, but we stood strong with those young democracies. We outlined a vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

In Asia, we deepened our alliances with old friends, Japan and South Korea, and we strengthened ties with China. I'm not so sure if this is historically accurate, but we may be the only administration that has had really good ties with Japan, South Korea, and China all at the same time.

And we opened a new historic and strategic partnership with India.

In Europe, we expanded NATO to include new democracies from the Baltics to the Balkans. We work in a multilateral fashion to deal with issues like Iran and North Korea.

In Africa, we helped resolve old conflicts and formed new partnerships to confront hunger and disease and poverty. I'm often asked, you know, "How come you, from Texas, care about Africa?" And I remind people—I'm reminded of one of my first conversations with Condi. And she said, "If I'm going to work with you, I want you to make sure you focus on Africa." She gets a lot of credit for the focus on Africa.

I also acted on this timeless belief: To whom much is given, much is required. We have been given a lot in our country. And it's not only in our strategic interests that we deal with hunger and disease, it is in our moral interest that we do so as well. In the Western Hemisphere, we expanded trade and helped our fellow democracies deliver prosperity and social justice to their people. And around the world, we built a coalition of more than 90 nations to fight terror and advance the cause of freedom in the great ideological struggle of our time.

In short, we've made our alliances stronger, we've made our Nation safer, and we have made the world freer. The record is a testament to all those who have served, including our outstanding Foreign Service officers. This is a profession that requires commitment and sacrifice. When you volunteered for the Foreign Service, you agreed to put the needs of your country before your own and your family. You agreed to spend years away from home, and you knew that your service might just put you in harm's way.

Today we send our thoughts and prayers to all the men and women representing America in distant lands, and we pledge that we will never forget the brave souls who did not come home.

As President, I have entrusted the Foreign Service with our Nation's most critical diplomatic missions. I have relied on your expertise, your advice, and your good judgment. I will always be grateful for your valor and your professionalism.

Members of the Foreign Service bring this valor and professionalism to their work every single day. And there is one man who embodies these qualities above all: Ambassador Ryan Crocker. Over the years, Ryan has earned many honors, including the Presidential Meritorious Service Award and the

rank of Career Ambassador. Today I have the privilege of honoring Ambassador Crocker with the highest civil award I can bestow, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. [*Applause*] Okay. It has not been bestowed yet. [*Laughter*]

The son of an Air Force officer, Ryan Crocker has never been your typical diplomat. For social engagements, he likes to tell guests, "no socks required." [*Laughter*] For language training, he once spent time herding sheep with a desert tribe in Jordan. For sport, he has jogged through war zones and run marathons on four continents. And for assignments, his preference has always been anywhere but Washington. [*Laughter*]

During his nearly four decades in the Foreign Service, Ryan Crocker has become known as America's Lawrence of Arabia. His career has taken him to every corner of the Middle East. His understanding of the region is unmatched. His exploits are legendary. He has served as ambassador to five countries. He has repeatedly taken on the most challenging assignments.

The man has never run from danger. As a young officer during the late 1970s, Ryan catalogued Saddam Hussein's murderous rise to power. In 1983, he survived the terrorist attack on the American Embassy in Lebanon. In 1998, as the Ambassador to Syria, he witnessed an angry mob plunder his residence.

After any one of these brushes with danger, most people would have lost their appetite for adventure—not Ryan Crocker. In the years since September the 11th, 2001, I have asked Ryan to hold numerous posts on the frontlines of the war on terror, and he has stepped forward enthusiastically every time.

When the American Embassy in Kabul reopened in the beginning of 2002, Ryan Crocker was our first envoy. When we liberated Iraq and removed the thug Saddam Hussein from power in 2003, I sent Ryan to help lead the reconstruction efforts. When the American Embassy in Pakistan needed new leadership, Ryan Crocker was put in charge. In 2007, I asked Ryan to return for a final mission to Iraq as America's Ambassador.

Two years later, Iraq is becoming a rising democracy, an ally in the war on terror, an inspiring model of freedom for people across the Middle East. When the story of this transformation is written, historians will note the extraordinary partnership between two exceptional men: General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker. As the General carried out a surge of military forces to improve security, the Ambassador led a civilian surge to improve everyday life. In December, after months of intense negotiations, the world saw the culmination of Ambassador Crocker's masterful diplomacy: two historic agreements for long-term cooperation between the United States and Iraq.

This is not the first time that Ambassador Crocker has executed a brilliant diplomatic maneuver in Baghdad. During a rotation at the American Embassy nearly 30 years ago, he persuaded a young Foreign Service officer named Christine Barnes to be his wife. [*Laughter*] They have traveled the world together, and as Ryan prepares to retire from the Foreign Service, we wish the two of them many years of happiness.

General Petraeus recently said this about his retiring colleague: "It was a great honor for me to be his military wingman." And today it is my great honor to present the Presidential Medal of Freedom to one of the finest Foreign Service officers in American history, Ryan Clark Crocker. And now the military aide will read the citation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:14 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commander, U.S. Central Command, in his former capacity as commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Lt. Cmdr. Clay Beers, USN, Navy Aide to the President. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on the U.S. Airways Plane Crash in New York City

January 15, 2009

My administration is coordinating with State and local officials to respond to this afternoon's plane crash in New York City. We continue to monitor the situation. Laura and I are inspired by the skill and heroism of the flight crew, as well as the dedication

and selflessness of the emergency responders and volunteers who rescued passengers from the icy waters of the Hudson. We send our thoughts and prayers to all involved in the accident.

Proclamation 8339—National Sanctity of Human Life Day, 2009

January 15, 2009

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

All human life is a gift from our Creator that is sacred, unique, and worthy of protection. On National Sanctity of Human Life Day, our country recognizes that each person, including every person waiting to be born, has a special place and purpose in this world. We also underscore our dedication to heeding this message of conscience by speaking up for the weak and voiceless among us.

The most basic duty of government is to protect the life of the innocent. My Administration has been committed to building a culture of life by vigorously promoting adoption and parental notification laws, opposing Federal funding for abortions overseas, encouraging teen abstinence, and funding crisis pregnancy programs. In 2002, I was honored to sign into law the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act, which extends legal protection to children who survive an abortion attempt. I signed legislation in 2003 to ban the cruel practice of partial-birth abortion, and that law represents our commitment to building a culture of life in America. Also, I was proud to sign the Unborn Victims of Violence Act of 2004, which allows authorities to charge a person who causes death or injury to a child in the womb with a separate offense in addition to any charges relating to the mother.

America is a caring Nation, and our values should guide us as we harness the gifts of science. In our zeal for new treatments and cures, we must never abandon our fundamental morals. We can achieve the great breakthroughs we all seek with reverence for the gift of life.

The sanctity of life is written in the hearts of all men and women. On this day and throughout the year, we aspire to build a society in which every child is welcome in life and protected in law. We also encourage more of our fellow Americans to join our just and noble cause. History tells us that with a cause rooted in our deepest principles and appealing to the best instincts of our citizens, we will prevail.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 18, 2009, as National Sanctity of Human Life Day. I call upon all Americans to recognize this day with appropriate ceremonies and to underscore our commitment to respecting and protecting the life and dignity of every human being.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:15 a.m., January 16, 2009]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 21.

Memorandum on Limited Waiver of Certain Sanctions Imposed by, and Delegation of Certain Authorities Pursuant to, the Tom Lantos Block Burmese JADE (Junta's Anti-Democratic Efforts) Act of 2008

January 15, 2009

Presidential Determination No. 2009–11

Memorandum for the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treasury

Subject: Limited Waiver of Certain Sanctions Imposed by, and Delegation of Certain Authorities Pursuant to, the Tom Lantos Block Burmese JADE (Junta's Anti-Democratic Efforts) Act of 2008

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United

States, including the Tom Lantos Block Burmese JADE (Junta's Anti-Democratic Efforts) Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–286) (JADE Act) and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, in order to ensure that the United States Government's sanctions against the Burmese leadership and its supporters continue to be implemented effectively, to allow the reconciliation of measures applicable to persons sanctioned under the JADE Act with measures applicable to the same persons sanctioned under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*), and to allow for the implementation of additional appropriate sanctions:

(1) I hereby waive, pursuant to section 5(i) of the JADE Act, the provisions of section 5(b) of the JADE Act with respect to those persons described in section 5(a)(1) of the JADE Act who are not included on the Department of the Treasury's List of Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons. Because the imposition of effective and meaningful blocking sanctions requires the identification of those individuals and entities targeted for sanction and the authorization of certain limited exceptions to the prohibitions and restrictions that would otherwise apply, I hereby determine and certify that such a limited waiver is in the national interest of the United States.

(2) I hereby delegate to the Secretary of the Treasury the waiver authority set forth in section 5(i) of the JADE Act, including the authority to invoke or revoke the waiver with respect to any person or persons or any transaction or category of transactions or prohibitions by making the necessary determination and certification regarding the national interest of the United States set forth in that section. I hereby direct the Secretary of the Treasury, after consultation with the Secretary of State and with necessary support from the Intelligence Community, as defined in section 3(4) of the National Security Act of 1947, as amended (50 U.S.C. 401a(4)), to continue to target aggressively the Burmese regime and its lines of support. I further delegate to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority to take such actions as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of section 5(b) of the JADE Act. The Secretary of the Treasury may redelegate any of these functions to other officers and agencies of the United States Government consistent with applicable law. The authorities delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury under this memorandum shall be exercised after consultation with the Secretary of State.

(3) I authorize the Secretary of State, after consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury, to take such actions as may be necessary to make the submissions to the appropriate congressional committees pursuant to section 5(d) of the JADE Act.

I hereby authorize and direct the Secretary of the Treasury to report this determination to the appropriate congressional committees and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 15, 2009.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:15 a.m., January 16, 2009]

NOTE: This Presidential Determination will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 21.

Memorandum on Proposed Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Arab Emirates Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

January 15, 2009

Presidential Determination No. 2009–12

Memorandum for the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Energy

Subject: Proposed Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Arab Emirates Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

I have considered the proposed Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Arab Emirates Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear

Energy, along with the views, recommendations, and statements of the interested agencies.

I have determined that the performance of the Agreement will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security. Pursuant to section 123 b. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153(b)), I hereby approve the proposed Agreement and authorize the Secretary of State to arrange for its execution.

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 15, 2009

On January 23, 1995, by Executive Order 12947, the President declared a national emergency pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process. On August 20, 1998, by Executive Order 13099, the President modified the Annex to Executive Order 12947 to identify four additional persons, including Usama bin Laden, who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process.

Because these terrorist activities continue to threaten the Middle East peace process and to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, the national emergency declared on January 23, 1995, as expanded on August 20, 1998, and the measures adopted on those dates to deal with that emergency must continue in effect beyond January 23, 2009. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process.

This notice shall be published in the Federal Register and transmitted to the Congress.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 15, 2009.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:15 a.m., January 16, 2009]

NOTE: This notice will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 21.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 15, 2009

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the emergency declared with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process is to continue in effect beyond January 23, 2009.

The crisis with respect to the grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that led to the declaration of a national emergency on January 23, 1995, as expanded on August 20, 1998, has not been resolved. Terrorist groups continue to engage in activities that have the purpose or effect of threatening the Middle East peace process and that are hostile to United States interests in the region. Such actions constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and

economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process and to maintain in force the economic sanctions against them to respond to this threat.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 15, 2009.

Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency Relating to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels

January 15, 2009

On March 1, 1996, by Proclamation 6867, a national emergency was declared to address the disturbance or threatened disturbance of international relations caused by the February 24, 1996, destruction by the Cuban government of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba. In July 1996 and on subsequent occasions, the Cuban government stated its intent to forcefully defend its sovereignty against any U.S.-registered vessels or aircraft that might enter Cuban territorial waters or airspace while involved in a flotilla or peaceful protest. Since these events, the Cuban government has not demonstrated that it will refrain from the future use of reckless and excessive force against U.S. vessels or aircraft that may engage in memorial activities or peaceful protest north of Cuba. On February 26, 2004, by Proclamation 7757, the scope of the national emergency was expanded in order to deny monetary and material support to the repressive Cuban government, which had taken a series of steps to destabilize relations with the United States, including threatening to abrogate the Migration Accords with the United States and to close the United States Interests Section. Further, Cuba's most senior officials repeatedly asserted that the United States intended to invade Cuba, despite explicit denials from the U.S. Secretaries of State and Defense that such action is planned. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing the national emergency with respect to Cuba and the emergency authority relating to the regulation of the anchorage and movement of vessels set out in Proclamation 6867 as amended and expanded by Proclamation 7757.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 15, 2009.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:15 a.m., January 16, 2009]

NOTE: This notice will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 21.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency Relating to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels

January 15, 2009

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the national emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, as amended and expanded on February 26, 2004, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2009.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 15, 2009.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Review of Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996

January 15, 2009

Dear _____:

Consistent with section 306(c)(2) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–114) (the "Act"), I hereby determine and report to the Congress that suspension for 6 months beyond February 1, 2009, of the right to bring an action under title III of the Act is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to David R. Obey, chairman, and Jerry Lewis, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; Daniel K. Inouye, chairman, and W. Thad Cochran, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Howard L. Berman, chairman, and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, ranking member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs; and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., chairman, and Richard G. Lugar, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the 2009 National Drug Control Strategy

January 15, 2009

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit the 2009 National Drug Control Strategy, consistent with the provisions of section 201 of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006.

My Administration released its first National Drug Control Strategy in 2002 with the commitment to turn the tide against a problem that truly threatens everything that is good about our country. As we prepare to pass this noble charge to a new team of leaders, we can look back with satisfaction on what we have achieved together as a Nation. From community coalitions to our international partnerships, we pursued a balanced strategy that emphasized stopping initiation, reducing drug abuse and addiction, and disrupting drug markets.

The results of our efforts are clear. Together we have helped reduce teenage drug use by 25 percent since 2001. This means 900,000 fewer American teens are using drugs. The Access to Recovery program alone has extended treatment services to more than 260,000 Americans. Through law enforcement cooperation and international partnerships, the United States has caused serious disruptions in the availability of drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamine, reducing the threat such drugs pose to the American people, while also denying profits to drug traffickers and terrorists.

Our work is by no means complete—we must build on these efforts both to further reduce drug use and to rise to new challenges. I thank the Congress for its support and ask that it continue to support this critical endeavor.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 15, 2009.

Message to the Congress Transmitting an Extension of the Russia-United States Mutual Fisheries Agreement

January 15, 2009

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), I transmit herewith an Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Russian Federation Extending the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of the Russian Federation on Mutual Fisheries Relations of May 31, l988, with annex, as extended (the "Mutual Fisheries Agreement"). The present Agreement, which was effected by an exchange of notes in Moscow on March 28, 2008, and September 19, 2008, extends the Mutual Fisheries Agreement until December 31, 2013.

In light of the importance of our fisheries relationship with the Russian Federation, I urge that the Congress give favorable consideration to this Agreement at an early date.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 15, 2009.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Malta-United States Taxation Convention

January 15, 2009

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for Senate advice and consent to ratification, the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Malta for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion With Respect to Taxes on Income, signed on August 8, 2008, at Valletta (the "proposed Convention"). I also transmit for the information of the Senate the report of the Department of State, which includes an Overview of the proposed Convention.

The proposed Convention provides for reduced withholding rates on cross-border payments of dividends, interest, royalties, and other income. The proposed Convention contains a restrictive provision designed to prevent "treaty shopping," which is the inappropriate use of a tax treaty by third-country residents. The proposed Convention also provides for the exchange of information between the competent authorities to facilitate the administration of each country's tax laws.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the proposed Convention and give its advice and consent to ratification.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 15, 2009.

Farewell Address to the Nation

January 15, 2009

Thank you. Fellow citizens: For 8 years, it has been my honor to serve as your President. The first decade of this new century has been a period of consequence, a time set apart. Tonight, with a thankful heart, I have asked for a final opportunity to share some thoughts on the journey that we have traveled together and the future of our Nation.

Five days from now, the world will witness the vitality of American democracy. In a tradition dating back to our founding, the Presidency will pass to a successor chosen by you, the American people. Standing on the steps of the Capitol will be a man whose history reflects the enduring promise of our land. This is a moment of hope and pride for our whole Nation. And I join all Americans in offering best wishes to President-elect Obama, his wife Michelle, and their two beautiful girls.

Tonight I am filled with gratitude to Vice President Cheney and members of my administration; to Laura, who brought joy to this house and love to my life; to our wonderful daughters, Barbara and Jenna; to my parents, whose examples have provided strength for a lifetime. And above all, I thank the American people for the trust you have given me. I thank you for the prayers that have lifted my spirits. And I thank you for the countless acts of courage, generosity, and grace that I have witnessed these past 8 years.

This evening my thoughts return to the first night I addressed you from this house, September the 11th, 2001. That morning, terrorists took nearly 3,000 lives in the worst attack on America since Pearl Harbor. I remember standing in the rubble of the World Trade Center 3 days later, surrounded by rescuers who had been working around the clock. I remember talking to brave souls who charged through smoke-filled corridors at the Pentagon and to husbands and wives whose loved ones became heroes aboard Flight 93. I remember Arlene Howard, who gave me her fallen son's police shield as a reminder of all that was lost. And I still carry his badge.

As the years passed, most Americans were able to return to life much as it had been before 9/11. But I never did. Every morning, I received a briefing on the threats to our Nation. I vowed to do everything in my power to keep us safe.

Over the past 7 years, a new Department of Homeland Security has been created. The military, the intelligence community, and the FBI have been transformed. Our Nation is equipped with new tools to monitor the terrorists' movements, freeze their finances, and break up their plots. And with strong allies at our side, we have taken the fight to the terrorists and those who support them. Afghanistan has gone from a nation where the Taliban harbored Al Qaida and stoned women in the streets to a young democracy that is fighting terror and encouraging girls to go to school. Iraq has gone from a brutal dictatorship and a sworn enemy of America to an Arab democracy at the heart of the Middle East and a friend of the United States.

There is legitimate debate about many of these decisions, but there can be little debate about the results. America has gone more than 7 years without another terrorist attack on our soil. This is a tribute to those who toil night and day to keep us safe: law enforcement officers, intelligence analysts, homeland security and diplomatic personnel, and the men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

Our Nation is blessed to have citizens who volunteer to defend us in this time of danger. I have cherished meeting these selfless patriots and their families. And America owes you a debt of gratitude. And to all our men and women in uniform listening tonight: There has been no higher honor than serving as your Commander in Chief.

The battles waged by our troops are part of a broader struggle between two dramatically different systems. Under one, a small band of fanatics demands total obedience to an oppressive ideology, condemns women to subservience, and marks unbelievers for murder. The other system is based on the conviction that freedom is the universal gift of Almighty God, and that liberty and justice light the path to peace.

This is the belief that gave birth to our Nation. And in the long run, advancing this belief is the only practical way to protect our citizens. When people live in freedom, they do not willingly choose leaders who pursue campaigns of terror. When people have hope in the future, they will not cede their lives to violence and extremism. So around the world, America is promoting human liberty, human rights, and human dignity. We're standing with dissidents and young democracies, providing AIDS medicine to dying patients—to bring dying patients back to life, and sparing mothers and babies from malaria. And this great republic, born alone in liberty, is leading the world toward a new age when freedom belongs to all nations.

For 8 years, we've also strived to expand opportunity and hope here at home. Across our country, students are rising to meet higher standards in public schools. A new Medicare prescription drug benefit is bringing peace of mind to seniors and the disabled. Every taxpayer pays lower income taxes. The addicted and suffering are finding new hope through faith-based programs. Vulnerable human life is better protected. Funding for our veterans has nearly doubled. America's air and water and lands are measurably cleaner. And the Federal bench includes wise new members like Justice Sam Alito and Chief Justice John Roberts.

When challenges to our prosperity emerged, we rose to meet them. Facing the prospect of a financial collapse, we took decisive measures to safeguard our economy. These are very tough times for hard-working families. But the toll would be far worse if we had not acted. All Americans are in this together. And together, with determination and hard work, we will restore our economy to the path of growth. We will show the world once again the resilience of America's free enterprise system.

Like all who have held this office before me, I have experienced setbacks. And there are things I would do differently if given the chance. Yet I've always acted with the best interests of our country in mind. I have followed my conscience and done what I thought was right. You may not agree with some of the tough decisions I have made, but I hope you can agree that I was willing to make the tough decisions.

The decades ahead will bring more hard choices for our country, and there are some guiding principles that shape—should shape our course.

While our Nation is safer than it was 7 years ago, the gravest threat to our people

remains another terrorist attack. Our enemies are patient and determined to strike again. America did nothing to seek or deserve this conflict. But we have been given solemn responsibilities, and we must meet them. We must resist complacency. We must keep our resolve. And we must never let down our guard.

At the same time, we must continue to engage the world with confidence and clear purpose. In the face of threats from abroad, it can be tempting to seek comfort by turning inward. But we must reject isolationism and its companion, protectionism. Retreating behind our borders would only invite danger. In the 21st century, security and prosperity at home depend on the expansion of liberty abroad. If America does not lead the cause of freedom, that cause will not be led.

As we address these challenges and others we cannot foresee tonight, America must maintain our moral clarity. I've often spoken to you about good and evil, and this has made some uncomfortable. But good and evil are present in this world, and between the two there can be no compromise. Murdering the innocent to advance an ideology is wrong every time, everywhere. Freeing people from oppression and despair is eternally right. This Nation must continue to speak out for justice and truth. We must always be willing to act in their defense and to advance the cause of peace.

President Thomas Jefferson once wrote: "I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past." As I leave the house he occupied two centuries ago, I share that optimism. America is a young country, full of vitality, constantly growing and renewing itself. And even in the toughest times, we lift our eyes to the broad horizon ahead.

I have confidence in the promise of America because I know the character of our people. This is a nation that inspires immigrants to risk everything for the dream of freedom. This is a nation where citizens show calm in times of danger and compassion in the face of suffering. We see examples of America's character all around us. And Laura and I have invited some of them to join us in the White House this evening.

We see America's character in Dr. Tony Recasner, a principal who opened a new charter school from the ruins of Hurricane Katrina. We see it in Julio Medina, a former inmate who leads a faith-based program to help prisoners returning to society. We see it in Staff Sergeant Aubrey McDade, who charged into an ambush in Iraq and rescued three of his fellow marines.

We see America's character in Bill Krissoff, a surgeon from California. His son Nathan, a marine, gave his life in Iraq. When I met Dr. Krissoff and his family, he delivered some surprising news. He told me he wanted to join the Navy Medical Corps in honor of his son. This good man was 60 years old, 18 years above the age limit. But his petition for a waiver was granted, and for the past year he has trained in battlefield medicine. Lieutenant Commander Krissoff could not be here tonight because he will soon deploy to Iraq, where he will help save America's wounded warriors and uphold the legacy of his fallen son.

In citizens like these, we see the best of our country, resilient and hopeful, caring and strong. These virtues give me an unshakable faith in America. We have faced danger and trial, and there's more ahead. But with the courage of our people and confidence in our ideals, this great Nation will never tire, never falter, and never fail.

It has been the privilege of a lifetime to serve as your President. There have been good days and tough days. But every day I have been inspired by the greatness of our country and uplifted by the goodness of our people. I have been blessed to represent this Nation we love. And I will always be honored to carry a title that means more to me than any other, citizen of the United States of America.

And so, my fellow Americans, for the final time, good night. May God bless this house and our next President, and may God bless you and our wonderful country. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:01 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Malia and Natasha "Sasha" Obama, daughters of President-elect Barack Obama; Arlene Howard, mother of Port Authority Police officer George Howard, who was killed at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001; Dr. Anthony "Tony" Recasner, principal, Samuel J. Green Charter School, New Orleans, LA; and

Julio Medina, executive director, Exodus Transitional Community, New York, NY. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Proclamation 8340—Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, 2009

January 15, 2009

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, we recognize one of history's most consequential advocates for equality and civil rights, and we celebrate his powerful message of justice and hope. Our Nation is better because Dr. King was a man of courage and vision who understood that love and compassion will always triumph over bitterness and hatred.

As Americans, we believe it is self-evident that all men are created equal and that freedom is not a grant of government but a gift from the Author of Life. Dr. King trusted in these beliefs articulated in our founding documents even when our country's practices did not live up to its promises. He roused the conscience of a complacent Nation by drawing attention to the ugliness of discrimination and segregation and by calling on Americans to live up to our guarantee of equality.

Our Nation has seen tremendous progress in redeeming the ideals of America and protecting every person's God-given rights. The historic election of Barack Obama as President of the United States reflects the real advances our Nation has made in the fight against the bigotry that Dr. King opposed. More work remains, though, and we must heed Dr. King's words that "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." By continuing to spread his message and demanding that the equal rights he fought for are extended to all people, we can ensure that the dignity of every person is respected and that the hope for a better tomorrow reaches every community throughout the world.

As we observe Dr. King's birthday, we commemorate his leadership and strength of character. We go forward with confidence that if we remain true to our founding principles, our Nation will continue to advance the cause of justice and remain a beacon of hope to people everywhere.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 19, 2009, as the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday. I encourage all Americans to observe this day with appropriate civic, community, and service programs and activities in honor of Dr. King's life and legacy.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:15 a.m., January 21, 2009]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 16, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 22.

Statement on Death of Andrew Wyeth

January 16, 2009

Laura and I deeply mourn the death of American painter Andrew Wyeth.

Mr. Wyeth captured America in his paintings of his native Pennsylvania and Maine.

Mr. Wyeth was no stranger to White House recognitions. He received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1963. President Nixon sponsored an exhibition of Andrew Wyeth's paintings at the White House. In 1990, my father presented Mr. Wyeth the Congressional Gold Medal. And in 2007, I awarded Mr. Wyeth the National Medal of Arts in recognition of his lifetime achievement and contribution to American arts and culture.

Laura and I are fortunate to have known Andrew Wyeth and to have had the pleasure of enjoying his work. In 2005, Andrew and his wife, Betsy, presented to the White

House his painting, "Jupiter," which is displayed in the Family Sitting Room in the Residence.

On behalf of the American people, Laura and I offer our sincere condolences to Betsy and the Wyeth family. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

Proclamation 8341—To Implement the United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement and For Other Purposes

January 16, 2009

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1. On April 12, 2006, the United States entered into the United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement (the "Agreement"), and on June 24 and June 25, 2007, the Parties to the Agreement signed a protocol amending the Agreement. Congress approved the Agreement as amended in section 101(a) of the United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement Implementation Act (the "Implementation Act") (Public Law 110–138, 121 Stat. 1455) (19 U.S.C. 3805 note).

2. Section 105(a) of the Implementation Act authorizes the President to establish or designate within the Department of Commerce an office that shall be responsible for providing administrative assistance to panels established under chapter 21 of the Agreement.

3. Section 201 of the Implementation Act authorizes the President to proclaim such modifications or continuation of any duty, such continuation of duty-free or excise treatment, or such additional duties, as the President determines to be necessary or appropriate to carry out or apply Articles 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 3.3.13 and Annex 2.3 of the Agreement.

4. Section 201(d) of the Implementation Act authorizes the President to take such action as may be necessary in implementing the tariff-rate quotas set forth in Appendix I to the Schedule of the United States to Annex 2.3 of the Agreement to ensure that imports of agricultural goods do not disrupt the orderly marketing of commodities in the United States.

5. Consistent with section 201(a)(2) of the Implementation Act, Peru is to be removed from the enumeration of designated beneficiary developing countries eligible for the benefits of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) on the date the Agreement enters into force. Further, consistent with section 604 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "1974 Act") (19 U.S.C. 2483), I have determined that other technical and conforming changes to the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS) are necessary to reflect that Peru is no longer eligible to receive the benefits of the GSP.

6. Section 203 of the Implementation Act sets forth certain rules for determining whether a good is an originating good for the purpose of implementing preferential tariff treatment provided for under the Agreement. I have decided that it is necessary to include these rules of origin, together with particular rules applicable to certain other goods, in the HTS.

7. Section 203(o) of the Implementation Act authorizes the President to determine that a fabric, yarn, or fiber is or is not available in commercial quantities in a timely manner in the United States and Peru; to establish procedures governing the request for any such determination and ensuring appropriate public participation in any such determination; to add any fabric, yarn, or fiber determined to be not available in commercial quantities in a timely manner in the United States and Peru to the list in Annex 3–B of the Agreement in a restricted or unrestricted quantity; to eliminate a restriction on the quantity of a fabric, yarn, or fiber within 6 months after adding the fabric, yarn, or fiber to the list in Annex 3–B of the Agreement in a restricted quantity; and to restrict the quantity of, or remove from the list in Annex 3–B of the Agreement, certain fabrics, yarns, or fibers.

8. Section 208 of the Implementation Act authorizes the President to take certain enforcement actions relating to trade with Peru in textile and apparel goods.

9. Subtitle B of title III of the Implementation Act authorizes the President to take certain actions in response to a request by an

interested party for relief from serious damage or actual threat thereof to a domestic industry producing certain textile or apparel articles.

10. Executive Order 11651 of March 3, 1972, as amended, established the Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA), consisting of representatives of the Departments of State, the Treasury, Commerce, and Labor, and the Office of the United States Trade Representative, with the representative of the Department of Commerce as Chairman, to supervise the implementation of textile trade agreements. Consistent with section 301 of title 3, United States Code, when carrying out functions vested in the President by statute and assigned by the President to CITA, the officials collectively exercising those functions are all to be officers required to be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate.

11. Presidential Proclamation 7971 of December 22, 2005, implemented the United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement (USMFTA). The proclamation implemented, pursuant to section 201 of the United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (the "USMFTA Act") (Public Law 108–302, 118 Stat. 1103) (19 U.S.C. 3805 note), the staged reductions in rates of duty that I determined to be necessary or appropriate to carry out or apply certain provisions of the USMFTA, including Articles 2.5 and 2.6. The proclamation inadvertently omitted two modifications to the HTS necessary to carry out the provisions of Articles 2.5 and 2.6 of the USMFTA. I have determined that technical corrections to the HTS are necessary to provide the intended tariff treatment under Articles 2.5 and 2.6 of the USMFTA.

12. Presidential Proclamation 8039 of July 27, 2006, implemented the United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement (USBFTA). The proclamation implemented, pursuant to section 201 of the United State-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (the "USBFTA Act") (Public Law 109–169, 119 Stat. 3581), the staged reductions in rates of duty that I determined to be necessary or appropriate to carry out or apply certain provisions of the USBFTA, including Articles 2.5 and 2.6. The proclamation inadvertently omitted two modifications to the HTS necessary to carry out the provisions of Articles 2.5 and 2.6 of the USBFTA. I have determined that technical corrections to the HTS are necessary to provide the intended tariff treatment under Articles 2.5 and 2.6 of the USBFTA.

13. Presidential Proclamation 8331 of December 23, 2008, implemented the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) for trade with Costa Rica. The proclamation implemented, pursuant to section 201 of the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (the "CAFTA-DR Act") (Public Law 109–53, 119 Stat. 467) (19 U.S.C. 4031), the duty treatment necessary to carry out or apply Articles 3.3 and 3.27, and Annexes 3.3 (including the schedule of United States duty reductions with respect to originating goods) and 3.27, of the CAFTA-DR. I have determined that technical corrections to the HTS are necessary to provide the intended duty treatment under the CAFTA-DR.

14. Section 604 of the 1974 Act, as amended, authorizes the President to embody in the HTS the substance of relevant provisions of that Act, or other Acts affecting import treatment, and of actions taken thereunder, including the removal, modification, continuance, or imposition of any rate of duty or other import restriction.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, acting under the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including but not limited to section 604 of the 1974 Act; sections 105(a), 201, 203, 208, and subtitle B of title III of the Implementation Act; and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, and having made the determination under section 101(b) of the Implementation Act necessary for the exchange of notes, do hereby proclaim:

(1) In order to provide generally for the preferential tariff treatment being accorded under the Agreement, to set forth rules for determining whether goods imported into the customs territory of the United States are

eligible for preferential tariff treatment under the Agreement, to provide certain other treatment to originating goods of Peru for the purposes of the Agreement, to provide tariff-rate quotas with respect to certain originating goods of Peru, to reflect Peru's removal from the enumeration of designated beneficiary developing countries for purposes of the GSP, and to make technical and conforming changes in the general notes to the HTS, the HTS is modified as set forth in Annex I of Publication 4058 of the United States International Trade Commission, entitled, "Modifications to the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States to Implement the United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement", which is incorporated by reference into this proclamation.

(2) In order to implement the initial stage of duty elimination provided for in the Agreement and to provide for future staged reductions in duties for originating goods of Peru for purposes of the Agreement, the HTS is modified as provided in Annex II of Publication 4058, effective on the dates specified in the relevant sections of such publication and on any subsequent dates set forth for such duty reductions in that publication.

(3) The amendments to the HTS made by paragraphs (1) and (2) of this proclamation shall be effective with respect to goods entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after the relevant dates indicated in Annex II to Publication 4058.

(4) The Secretary of Commerce is authorized to exercise my authority under section 105(a) of the Implementation Act to establish or designate an office within the Department of Commerce to carry out the functions set forth in that section.

(5) The United States Trade Representative (USTR) is authorized to exercise my authority under section 201(d) of the Implementation Act to take such action as may be necessary in implementing the tariff-rate quotas set forth in Appendix I to the Schedule of the United States to Annex 2.3 of the Agreement to ensure that imports of agricultural goods do not disrupt the orderly marketing of commodities in the United States. This action is set forth in Annex I of Publication 4058.

(6) The CITA is authorized to exercise my authority under section 203(o) of the Implementation Act to determine that a fabric, yarn, or fiber is or is not available in commercial quantities in a timely manner in the United States and Peru; to establish procedures governing the request for any such determination and ensuring appropriate public participation in any such determination; to add any fabric, yarn, or fiber determined to be not available in commercial quantities in a timely manner in the United States and Peru to the list in Annex 3–B of the Agreement in a restricted or unrestricted quantity; to eliminate a restriction on the quantity of a fabric, yarn, or fiber within 6 months after adding the fabric, yarn, or fiber to the list in Annex 3–B of the Agreement in a restricted quantity; and to restrict the quantity of, or remove from the list in Annex 3–B of the Agreement, certain fabrics, yarns, or fibers.

(7) The CITA is authorized to exercise my authority under section 208 of the Implementation Act to exclude certain textile and apparel goods from the customs territory of the United States; to determine whether an enterprise's production of, and capability to produce, goods are consistent with statements by the enterprise; to find that an enterprise has knowingly or willfully engaged in circumvention; and to deny preferential tariff treatment to textile and apparel goods.

(8) The CITA is authorized to exercise the functions of the President under subtitle B of title III of the Implementation Act to review requests, and to determine whether to commence consideration of such requests; to cause to be published in the Federal Register a notice of commencement of consideration of a request and notice seeking public comment; to determine whether imports of a Peruvian textile or apparel article are causing serious damage, or actual threat thereof, to a domestic industry producing an article that is like, or directly competitive with, the imported article; and to provide relief from imports of an article that is the subject of such a determination.

(9) The CITA, after consultation with the Commissioner of Customs (the "Commissioner"), is authorized to consult with representatives of Peru for the purpose of identifying particular textile or apparel goods of Peru that are mutually agreed to be handloomed fabrics, handmade goods made of such handloomed fabrics, folklore goods, or handmade goods that substantially incorporate a historical or traditional regional design or motif, as provided in Article 3.3.12 of the Agreement. The Commissioner shall take actions as directed by the CITA to carry out any such determination.

(10) The USTR is authorized to fulfill my obligations under section 104 of the Implementation Act to obtain advice from the appropriate advisory committees and the United States International Trade Commission on the proposed implementation of an action by presidential proclamation; to submit a report on such proposed action to the appropriate congressional committees; and to consult with those congressional committees regarding the proposed action.

(11) The USTR is authorized to modify U.S. note 29 to subchapter XXII of chapter 98 of the HTS in a notice published in the Federal Register to reflect modifications pursuant to paragraph (6) of this proclamation by the CITA to the list of fabrics, yarns, or fibers in Annex 3–B of the Agreement.

(12) In order to make technical corrections necessary to provide the intended duty treatment under Articles 2.5 and 2.6 of the USMFTA, Articles 2.5 and 2.6 of the USBFTA, and the CAFTA-DR, the HTS is modified as set forth in Annex III of Publication 4058.

(13) All provisions of previous proclamations and Executive Orders that are inconsistent with the actions taken in this proclamation are superseded to the extent of such inconsistency.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 2:30 p.m., January 21, 2009]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 22.

Proclamation 8342—To Suspend Entry as Immigrants and Nonimmigrants of Foreign Government Officials Responsible for Failing To Combat Trafficking in Persons

January 16, 2009

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In order to foster greater resolve to address trafficking in persons (TIP), specifically in punishing acts of trafficking and providing protections to the victims of these crimes, consistent with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended (the "Act") (22 U.S.C. 7101 *et seq.*), it is in the interests of the United States to restrict the international travel and to suspend entry into the United States, as immigrants or nonimmigrants, of certain senior government officials responsible for domestic law enforcement, justice, or labor affairs who have impeded their governments' antitrafficking efforts, have failed to implement their governments' antitrafficking laws and policies, or who otherwise bear responsibility for their governments' failures to take steps recognized internationally as appropriate to combat trafficking in persons, and whose governments have been ranked more than once as Tier 3 countries, which represent the worst anti-TIP performers, in the Department of State's annual Trafficking in Persons Report, and for which I have made a determination pursuant to section 110(d)(1)–(2) or (4) of the Act. The Act reflects international antitrafficking standards that guide efforts to eradicate this modern-day form of slavery around the world.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 212(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, 8 U.S.C. 1182(f), and section 301 of title 3, United

States Code, hereby find that the unrestricted immigrant and nonimmigrant entry into the United States of persons described in section 1 of this proclamation would, except as provided for in sections 2 and 3 of this proclamation, be detrimental to the interests of the United States.

I therefore hereby proclaim that:

Section 1. The entry into the United States, as immigrants or nonimmigrants, of the following aliens is hereby suspended:

(a) Senior government officials—defined as the heads of ministries or agencies and officials occupying positions within the two bureaucratic levels below those top positions—responsible for domestic law enforcement, justice, or labor affairs who have impeded their governments' antitrafficking efforts, have failed to implement their governments' antitrafficking laws and policies, or who otherwise bear responsibility for their governments' failures to take steps recognized internationally as appropriate to combat trafficking in persons, and who are members of governments for which I have made a determination pursuant to section 110(d)(1)–(2) or (4) of the Act, in the current year and at least once in the preceding 3 years;

(b) The spouses of persons described in subsection (a) of this section.

Sec. 2. Section 1 of this proclamation shall not apply with respect to any person otherwise covered by section 1 where entry of such person would not be contrary to the interest of the United States.

Sec. 3. Persons covered by sections 1 or 2 of this proclamation shall be identified by the Secretary of State or the Secretary's designee, in his or her sole discretion, pursuant to such procedures as the Secretary may establish under section 5 of this proclamation.

Sec. 4. Nothing in this proclamation shall be construed to derogate from United States Government obligations under applicable international agreements.

Sec. 5. The Secretary of State shall implement this proclamation pursuant to such procedures as the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, may establish.

Sec. 6. This proclamation is effective immediately. It shall remain in effect until such time as the Secretary of State determines that it is no longer necessary and should be terminated, either in whole or in part. Any such determination by the Secretary of State shall be published in the *Federal Register*.

Sec. 7. This proclamation is not intended to, and does not, create any right, benefit, or privilege, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:15 a.m., January 21, 2009]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 22.

Executive Order 13488—Granting Reciprocity on Excepted Service and Federal Contractor Employee Fitness and Reinvestigating Individuals in Positions of Public Trust

January 16, 2009

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 1104(a)(1), 3301, and 7301 of title 5, United States Code, and in order to simplify and streamline the system of Federal Government personnel investigative and adjudicative processes to make them more efficient and effective, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Policy.* (a) When agencies determine the fitness of individuals to perform work as employees in the excepted service or as contractor employees, prior favorable fitness or suitability determinations should be granted reciprocal recognition, to the extent practicable.

(b) It is necessary to reinvestigate individuals in positions of public trust in order to

ensure that they remain suitable for continued employment.

Sec. 2. *Definitions.* For the purposes of this order:

(a) "Agency" means an executive agency as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code, but does not include the Government Accountability Office.

(b) "Contractor employee" means an individual who performs work for or on behalf of any agency under a contract and who, in order to perform the work specified under the contract, will require access to space, information, information technology systems, staff, or other assets of the Federal Government. Such contracts, include, but are not limited to:

(i) personal services contracts;
(ii) contracts between any non-Federal entity and any agency; and
(iii) sub-contracts between any non-Federal entity and another non-Federal entity to perform work related to the primary contract with the agency.

(c) "Excepted service" has the meaning provided in section 2103 of title 5, United States Code, but does not include those positions in any element of the intelligence community as defined in the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, to the extent they are not otherwise subject to Office of Personnel Management appointing authorities.

(d) "Fitness" is the level of character and conduct determined necessary for an individual to perform work for or on behalf of a Federal agency as an employee in the excepted service (other than a position subject to suitability) or as a contractor employee.

(e) "Fitness determination" means a decision by an agency that an individual has or does not have the required level of character and conduct necessary to perform work for or on behalf of a Federal agency as an employee in the excepted service (other than a position subject to suitability) or as a contractor employee. A favorable fitness determination is not a decision to appoint or contract with an individual.

(f) "Position of Public Trust" has the meaning provided in 5 *CFR* Part 731.

(g) "Suitability" has the meaning and coverage provided in *CFR* Part 731.

Sec. 3. *Agency Authority to Set Fitness Criteria and Determine Equivalency.* The authority to establish criteria for making fitness determinations remains within the discretion of the agency head. Agency heads also have the discretion to determine whether their criteria are equivalent to suitability standards established by the Office of Personnel Management. Agency heads shall take into account Office of Personnel Management guidance when exercising this discretion.

Sec. 4. *Reciprocal Recognition of Fitness and Suitability Determinations.* (a) Except as provided by subsection (b) of this section, agencies making fitness determinations shall grant reciprocal recognition to a prior favorable fitness or suitability determination when:

(i) the gaining agency uses criteria for making fitness determinations equivalent to suitability standards established by the Office of Personnel Management;
(ii) the prior favorable fitness or suitability determination was based on criteria equivalent to suitability standards established by the Office of Personnel Management; and
(iii) the individual has had no break in employment since the favorable determination was made.

(b) Exceptions to Reciprocal Recognition. A gaining agency is not required to grant reciprocal recognition to a prior favorable fitness or suitability determination when:

(i) the new position requires a higher level of investigation than previously conducted for that individual;
(ii) an agency obtains new information that calls into question the individual's fitness based on character or conduct; or
(iii) the individual's investigative record shows conduct that is incompatible with the core duties of the new position.

Sec. 5. *Reinvestigation of Individuals in Positions of Public Trust.* Individuals in positions of public trust shall be subject to reinvestigation under standards (including but not limited to the frequency of such reinvestigation) as determined by the Director of

the Office of Personnel Management, to ensure their suitability for continued employment.

Sec. 6. *Responsibilities.* (a) An agency shall report to the Office of Personnel Management the nature and results of the background investigation and fitness determination (or later changes to that determination) made on an individual, to the extent consistent with law.

(b) The Director of the Office of Personnel Management is delegated authority to implement this order, including the authority to issue regulations and guidance governing suitability, or guidance related to fitness, as the Director determines appropriate.

Sec. 7. *General Provisions.* (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) authority granted by law to a department or agency, or the head thereof; or

(ii) functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budget, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(b) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(c) This order shall not suspend, impede, or otherwise affect Executive Order 10450 of April 27, 1953, as amended, or Executive Order 13467 of June 30, 2008;

(d) This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers, employees or agents, or any other person.

Sec. 3. *Effective Date and Applicability.* This order is effective upon issuance and is applicable to individuals newly appointed to excepted service positions or hired as contractor employees beginning 90 days from the effective date of this order.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 16, 2009.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 2:30 p.m., January 21, 2009]

NOTE: This Executive order will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 22.

Memorandum on Eligibility of the Southern African Development Community To Receive Defense Articles and Defense Services under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as Amended, and the Arms Export Control Act, as Amended

January 16, 2009

Presidential Determination No. 2009–13

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Eligibility of the Southern African Development Community to Receive Defense Articles and Defense Services under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as Amended, and the Arms Export Control Act, as Amended

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 503(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and section 3(a)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, I hereby find that the furnishing of defense articles and defense services to the Southern African Development Community will strengthen the security of the United States and promote world peace.

You are authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Memorandum on Waiving the Prohibition on the Use of Economic Support Funds with Respect to Various Parties to the Rome Statute Establishing the International Criminal Court

January 16, 2009

Presidential Determination No. 2009–14

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Waiving the Prohibition on the Use of Economic Support Funds with Respect to Various Parties to the Rome Statute Establishing the International Criminal Court

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including section 671(b) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2008 (Division J, Public Law 110–161), I hereby:

- determine and report that it is important to the national interests of the United States to waive the prohibition of aforementioned section 671(a) with respect to Barbados, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Ecuador, Kenya, Mali, Mexico, Namibia, Niger, Paraguay, Peru, Samoa, South Africa, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Tanzania, and Trinidad and Tobago; and
- waive the prohibition of aforementioned section 671(a) with respect to these countries.

You are authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Memorandum on Designation of Officers of To Act as Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration

January 16, 2009

Memorandum for the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Subject: Designation of Officers of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration To Act as Administrator

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. 3345 *et seq.*, it is hereby ordered that:

Section 1. *Order of Succession.* Subject to the provisions of section 2 of this memorandum, the following officials of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), in the order listed, shall act as and perform the functions and duties of the office of the Administrator of NASA (Administrator), during any period in which both the Administrator and Deputy Administrator of NASA (Deputy Administrator) have died, resigned, or otherwise become unable to perform the functions and duties of the office of Administrator, until such time as the Administrator or Deputy Administrator is able to perform the functions and duties of that office:

(a) Associate Administrator;
(b) Chief of Staff to the NASA Administrator;
(c) Director for Johnson Space Flight Center;
(d) Director for Kennedy Space Flight Center; and
(e) Director for Marshall Space Flight Center.

Sec. 2. *Exceptions.* (a) No individual who is serving in an office listed in section 1 in

an acting capacity, by virtue of so serving, shall act as Administrator pursuant to this memorandum.

(b) No individual listed in section 1 shall act as Administrator unless that individual is otherwise eligible to so serve under the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998.

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of this memorandum, the President retains discretion, to the extent permitted by law, to depart from this memorandum in designating an acting Administrator.

Sec. 3. This memorandum is intended to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, it agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

Sec. 4. You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:45 a.m., January 21, 2009]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 16, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 22.

Memorandum on Designation of Officers To Act as President of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation

January 16, 2009

Memorandum for the President of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation

Subject: Designation of Officers to Act as President of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. 3345 *et seq.*, it is hereby ordered that:

Section 1. *Order of Succession.* Subject to the provisions of section 2 of this memorandum, the following officials of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, in the order listed, shall act as and perform the functions and duties of the office of the President of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (POPIC), during any period in which the POPIC has died, resigned, or otherwise become unable to perform the functions and duties of the office of POPIC, until such time as the POPIC is able to perform the functions and duties of that office:

(a) Executive Vice President;
(b) Vice President and General Counsel;
(c) Vice President and Chief Financial Officer;
(d) Deputy General Counsel; and
(e) Director of Operations.

Sec. 2. *Exceptions.*

(a) No individual who is serving in an office listed in section 1 in an acting capacity, by virtue of so serving, shall act as POPIC pursuant to this memorandum.

(b) No individual listed in section 1 shall act as POPIC unless that individual is otherwise eligible to so serve under the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998.

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of this memorandum, the President retains discretion, to the extent permitted by law, to depart from this memorandum in designating an acting POPIC.

Sec. 3. This memorandum is intended to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, it agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

Sec. 4. You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:45 a.m., January 21, 2009]

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 16, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 22.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

January 10

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Norfolk, VA.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, VA, where he met with U.S. Navy SEAL teams. Later, he traveled to Andrews Air Force Base, MD, where, in the Air Force One Hangar, he visited the Presidential Airlift Group. He then returned to Washington, DC.

January 12

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President announced his intention to appoint Robin Hayes, Susan C. Schwab, and Richard J. Tubb as members of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Air Force Academy.

The President announced his intention to designate Patrick Ward as Acting Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

January 13

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President declared an emergency in the District of Columbia and ordered Federal aid to supplement the District's response efforts in support of the 56th Presidential Inauguration.

January 14

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the East Room, the President met with and made remarks to family members of U.S. service members killed in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The President declared a major disaster in Vermont and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm from December 11–18.

January 15

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, at the State Department, he met with Foreign Service officers and State Department employees.

January 16

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Camp David, MD.

The President announced his intention to designate Edwin Smiley Kneedler as Acting Solicitor General at the Department of Justice.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released January 10

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by President Felipe Calderon of Mexico

Released January 13

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Tony Fratto

Statement by the Press Secretary on emergency assistance to the District of Columbia in support of the 56th Presidential Inauguration

Released January 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Vermont

Released January 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino and Counselor to the President Edward W. Gillespie

Excerpts of the President's farewell address to the Nation

Advance text of the President's farewell address to the Nation

Fact sheet: President Bush: Farewell Address To The Nation

Released January 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S.J. Res. 3

Acts Approved by the President

Approved January 16

S.J. Res. 3 / Public Law 111–1
Ensuring that the compensation and other emoluments attached to the office of Secretary of the Interior are those which were in effect on January 1, 2005